DAVID'S TESTAMENT,

Opened up in Fourty

SERMONS,

Upon II. *Samuel* 23. 5.

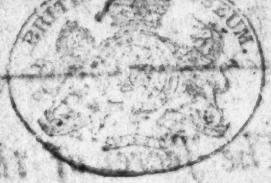
Wherein the *Nature*, *Properties*, and *Effects* of the *COVENANT* of *GRACE* are clearly held forth.

By that Eminent Servant of *JESUS CHRIST*, Mr. *Alexander Wedderburn*, First Minister of the Gospel at *Forgan* in *Fife*; and thereafter at *Kilmarnock* in the *West*.

Psal. 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his Covenant.*

EDINBURGH,
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To the truly Noble
MARGARET,
Countess of *ROTHES.*

Madam,

BEfore that pious and Eminent Person, The Dutches of *Rothes*, your Ladyships Renowned Mother, was by Death removed, I designed, according to the Intention of my Husband, (who is now entred into the joy of his Lord) to Dedicate this part of his Labours to her Grace. And now when these Papers, by advice of Faithful and Godly Ministers, are to be exposed to publick view, I judged it my duty to pay that respect to Her Grace's Memory, as to prefix your Ladyships Name thereunto, (which no doubt, if my Husband were alive, he himself would have done) which I the more confidently adventure upon, as that I know your Ladyship to be the lively Portraiture of the Graces and Vertues of your Noble, and now Glorified Mother, and to be of such Wisdom and Prudence, Humility and Self-denyal, as to excuse any thing of unsuitableness that may be in this, for one of my Station and Sex. But being unwilling to allow your Ladyship any diversion from the perusal of the Book it self, I shall only pray, that the Lord may preserve your Ladyship, and carry your hopeful Sons through the hazard of Non-age, and as they are Heirs of two Noble Families, to make them shine as Stars of the first Magnitude, amongst the Peers of this Nation; and begs leave to Subscribe my self,

Madam,
Your Ladyships singularly and perpetually obliged Servant,
H. T.
Relict of Mr. Alexander Wedderburn.

The Epistle to the
READER.

Christian Reader,

I Shall not detain thee, by expatiating to the commendation of the Author, and this part of his Labours; For the Author his Memory is still savoury to all who knew him, especially to those of the Shires of *Fife* and *Air*, where first and last he exercised his Ministry; and no wonder, for as he was well versed in Polemick Divinity, so was he a singular *Casuist*. He had the Tongue of the Learned to speak a word in season to the wearie; He knew when to Lance, & when to pour in Oyl, when to dispense a Corrosive, and when a Cordial; in a word, he was both a Son of Thunder, and a Son of Consolation. As for these *Sermons*, I am hopeful they will commend themselves to all who have Senses spiritually exercised, such will not quarrel at the simplicity & plainness of the Stile, he used not in Preaching, to put the Scaffold above the Building, no; his design was not to tickle the ear, but to reach the heart; had he purposed to commit these *Sermons* to the Press, and survived to review them, they had been more polished, but now they come out to publick view, as they dropped from his mouth, and as he Preached them, without Alteration or Addition. It is true, many have written, both well, and at great length, on this sweet Subject; but it is so fertile, that it will still afford new matter to such as arrest their Spirits, to pore on it; Thou wilt find here the Securities that the *Covenant* affords, the Properties of it, that it is *Everlasting, Sure, and ordered in all things*; as also the *Superstructure, This is all my Salvation, and all my desire*; And the sweet Harmony and Concord that is betwixt Gods Promises, and his Providences, well spoken to; but besides these, I suppose, thou wilt find the duty of Personal Covenanting, and the Method and Order that is to be kept, in laying claim to the Promises of the Covenant, as fully handled here, as any where else.

Reader,

Reader, I would earnestly intreat thee, now when all things earthly are so uncertain, to make sure this *Covenant-relation to God*, that he is thy God, & thou art his, by a *perpetual Covenant*; it's a greater Say, to be able to say on good ground, *My God*, than to say, *My Kingdom*; I have been often affected with some sort of Compassion at the reading the two Testimonies that two Heathen Monarchs gave to the Majesty of God, *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 2. 47. and 3. 28, 29. and *Darius*, *Dan.* 6. 26, 27. But alas! poor Souls, none of them could say, *My God*, but *The God of Daniel*, and *of the three Children*.

To perswade to make sure Covenant Relation, know it's this that gives confidence in our addresses to God, and that Faith gets readiest gripping on, in all thy straits, I shal only instance three exigences among many.

First, Under outward Tossings and Pressures from men, *David* 1 *Sam.* 30. 5, 6. is in great distress, and no wonder, the *Amalekites* had spoiled *Ziklag*, had carried away his two Wives, and his own men had threatned to stone him, in his great distress, so *ver.* 6. expresses it, he encourages himself in his God. When he is in the Wilderness of *Judah*, hunted by *Saul*, *Psal.* 63. 1. it's here again refreshing, *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee*; and when inclosed in the Cave, *Psal.* 142 and *vers.* 4. All refuge fails him, no man cared for his soul, this refreshes him, *v.* 5. Thou art my refuge, and my portion, in the land of the living.

Secondly, This Relation is eyed by Faith, and pleaded under desertion, *Psal.* 22. 1. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* *Psal.* 88. A Psalm wholly spent in sad Complaints, and yet *ver.* 1. *Heman* begins pleading Covenant-relation, *O God of my salvation*; *Isa.* 49. 14. *But Zion said the Lord hath forsaken me*; there unbelief and sense gets the start, but Faith as it were at the same breathing eyes this Relation, *My God hath forgotten me*.

Thirdly, This relation is refreshing at approaching Death, when the Cisterns of all created comforts will be broken, and may be, the old Tempter turns a keen Accuser, as in this Text, the matter of the ensuing Sermons, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. *Although my house be not so with God*, &c. *David's* house was not so with God as it should have been; *Amnon* had defiled it with Incest, and *Absalom* with unnatural Mur-

ther, Rebellion and Inceſt, and *David* himſelf with Adultery and Murther, and yet over the belly of this guilt, he can draw comfort from this Covenant-relation, and venture the weight of his Salvation, on this ſo well *Ordered Covenant*, and *ſure*. I might inſtance moe Caſes, but I ſpare.

It's this Relation that makes all Gods Attributes refreſhing to us, He who is a God of Salvation is *my God*, *Pſal.* 68. 20. and *Pſal.* 79. 9. The Church pleads for help on this Relation, *Help us, O God of our Salvation:* He who is All-ſufficient, who is Faithful and True, whoſe Mercies exceed all Dimenſions, is *my God*; Yea, it will make his Juſtice, which of all his Attributes, doth moſt terrifie a ſinner, under accuſations of guilt, it will make it refreſhing. He who is Juſt is my God, and his Juſtice requires not a double Ranſom, being ſatisfied in my Cautioner *Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.*

I ſhall cloſe with an excellent Sentence of Reverend Mr. *Dods* to this purpoſe, and it is this, A perſon who can ſatisfactorily anſwer two Queſtions, needs never to be diſcompoſed in whatever exigency, and the Queſtions are, *Queſt.* 1. Whoſe art thou; *I am Gods by Covenant-relation.* *Queſt.* 2. Where art thou? *I am about my Duty.* Theſe two were refreſhing to *Paul*, when near to be Shipwracked, *Acts* 27. 23. *The Angel of the Lord, whoſe I am*; There his Covenant-relation; and *whom I ſerve*, there he is at his duty.

That he who alone carrieth that Title, *The God of all Conſolation*, may make theſe Sermons refreſhing to thee, is the Prayer of

Thy well-wiſher, more willing, than able to promote thy Comfort,

W. T.

SERMON

SERMON I.

2 *Samuel* 23 *verse* 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with GOD; *yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.*

I Purpoſed this Summer, if the Lord give me time, to have handled ſome of Chriſt's ſelect Names, but have now reſolved before I come at them, to handle the Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace; *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*, Pſ. 25. I ſhal in the entry of it beg of God, that he may be with us, in going thorow the handling of it; and I obteſt you, as ye would not have this Covenant a witneſs againſt you, ſeriouſly to ponder, and to feed, by what ye ſhal hear ſpoken about it, I could not find one verſe in all the Bible, wherein the nature, properties, and effects of the Covenant, were more briefly ſummed up, than in this verſe, *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure*, &c.

For underſtanding the meaning of the words, the firſt verſe of the Chapter tells us, that they are the laſt words of *David* the Son of *Jeſſe*, imitating *Jacob*, *Gen.* 49. and *Moſes*, *Deut.* 32. making their Teſtaments, and ſhewing what were their greateſt encouragements when they were dying; he remembers ſome old experiences of God toward him, that he was the man whom God had anointed, and lifted up, and made the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*, and verſe 2. *The Spirit of the Lord ſpake by me*; he likewiſe encourages himſelf in Chriſt, whom he deſcribes in the fourth verſe.

I confeſs there are ſome Interpreters apply the words in the fourth v. to Rulers, becauſe of a word in the third v. but the current of Interpreters underſtand them of Chriſt, *And he ſhall be as the light of the morning, when the Sun riſeth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender graſs ſpringing out of the earth, by clear ſhining after rain*: a notable ſimilitude, expreſſing the ſweetneſs, brightneſs, and fruitfulneſs of Chriſt, ſo that after he has mentioned theſe two great Encouragements in the verſes that we have read, he pitches on that which ſecures all his other encouragements *David* had a very ſinful houſe, there was Murthers in it, and Inceſt in it of *Amnon* and *Tamar*, there was Adultery in it, and Lying, and a number of Evils, and when he was a dying, he reflects on what had been done in his houſe, and the reſult is, my houſe has not been ſo with God, *although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, &c. Which words, though ſome refer them to Chriſt, who was not as yet ſprung out of the root of *Jeſſe*, but was to be exhibit in the fulneſs of time, yet I rather take them, as relating to *David's* perſonal caſe, as ye ſhall hear when I come at it,

This being briefly the ſcope of the words, I will not be able in the work of this day, to enter on them, or to take them up in particulars: I will only take one general Obſervation from the ſcope of the words, and I look on it as a notable Porch and Introduction to all the Sermons, that are to follow on the Covenant, & of the order and ſureneſs of it, and all the reſt of the Ingredients mentioned in the Text. The Obſervation is this, *That one of the greateſt of encouragements at death, and when a man is about his laſt words, is, to have an intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant*. Theſe are the laſt words of the Son of *Jeſſe*, and there is his greateſt encouragement, *My houſe is not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, &c. Whether we underſtand by houſe, the houſe of his body, or of his Family, or of his Kingdom, as ſome do, or whether we take it in all the three, he had grounds of fear from them all, but the great encouragement, when he is ſpeaking his laſt words, is taken from his intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant: This Obſervation is the very ſcope of the words, when all things are bidding us adieu, & when we are quiting all our Charters and Lands, and leaving them to others to poſſeſs,

poſſeſs, an intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant is a great encouragement then; it's remarkable, *Heb.* 11. and two laſt *verſes* of the Chapter, *All theſe having obtained a good report through Faith, received not the Promiſes, God having provided ſome better thing for us*: Mark here now what was the encouragement of all theſe Clouds of Witneſſes, when they came to die, it was their Faith in the Covenant, they died in the Faith, and obtained a good report through Faith, not having obtained the Promiſes, but believing it.

For clearing of this, I will Premiſe two things to make way to the confirming of it. 1. An intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant is of abſolute neceſſity, through the whole courſe of our Life; there are four or five things will evince this. 1. The Covenant is the Light & guide of a Believers Life, *Iſa.* 42. 6. & 7. *v. I the Lord have called thee in righteouſneſs, and will hold thy hand, and keep thee, and will give thee for a Covenant to the People, for a Light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the Priſoners, and them that ſit in darkneſs, out of the Priſon houſe.* Mark how the two go together, he is given for a Covenant and a Light: for if it were not upon the account of a Covenant, we would not know how to ſet down one ſtep in our way to God. 2. The Covenant and an intereſt in it, is the door by which we come to know, that we are tranſlated out of nature into a ſtate of grace, therefore *Iſaiah* 56. *Every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my Covenant, them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my houſe of Prayer; and their burnt-offerings and ſacrifices, ſhall be accepted on mine altar.* And *Pſal.* 50. 5. *Gather my Saints together to me, that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice.* In effect the cloſing with the Covenant is our effectual calling. 3. The Covenant is the Foundation of all the Relations, and Conſequences of all the Familiarity grounded on theſe Relations, betwixt God and his People: The ground why we call him *My God, my hope, my rock, my husband, my Lord*, the ground of all theſe Relations, and Familiarity founded on them is the Covenant. 4. The Anſwer of all Challenges, nay of all Temptations, comes alſo from the Covenant; Ordinarly Challenges proceed from the Law, and the Threatnings and Curſes of the Law: The

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beſt Anſwer to them is, we are not under the Law, but under Grace, which is in effect to ſay, we are under a Covenant of Grace. *Laſtly*, The great help to perform duty is the Covenant, if we be commanded to repent, to pray, to believe, to ſuffer, we muſt always run to ſome Promiſe of the Covenant for ſtrength. and it is remarkable, there is no command in all the Law, but in the Covenant there is ſome Promiſe relating to that Duty, & ſtrength for performing of it, is holden out in the Promiſe; for in effect, if we look after Light, or clearing in our effectual calling, or if we would lay a ſure Foundation of either an intereſt in, or familiaritie with God, or hold off Temptations, or Challenges, or have ſtrength to perform Duties, it's neceſſary in the whole courſe of our life, that we know our intereſt in the Covenant; but this is eſpecially neceſſary, at Death: which before I yet confirm, I will add one Caution, which is this; That it may fall out, that perſons with whom God hath made an everlaſting Covenant, yet they may be unclear about their intereſt in the Covenant; when they come to die, they cannot ſay among their laſt words, the Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant: Among many things there may be theſe three, that may have influence, in the darkning of ones intereſt in the Covenant at Death, and when they are about their laſt words. 1. When one has been given much to doubting in the whole courſe of their Life, readily God may give them, though not a Hell for it, yet he may give them a flood of it at their Death; he loves to write their ſin on the chaſtiſement, therefore often as *Adonibezek* ſaid, when they cauſed to cut off his Thumbs and his great Toes, threeſcore and ten Kings, having their Thumbs & great Toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table, as I have done, ſays he, ſo hath the Lord requited me, *Judg.* 1. 7. Frequently the ſin of folks Life, he loves to write it on their end; ſo doth he with *Pharaoh*, when he deſired to be honoured by him, he hath this ſin among many, he would have all the Males of the Children of *Iſrael* drowned, & *Moſes* alſo was laid out to be drowned until *Pharaoh*'s daughter found him; & what is his end, he is drowned in the Redſea, The great predominant ſin of his Life is written on his end; when the life is full

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of doubtings, readily like *Pharaoh*, he loves to write their ſin on their chaſtiſement. 2. One may be darkned about their intereſt in the Covenant at Death, becauſe of ſome unrepented guilt, and however that guilt ſhake their intereſt in the Covenant, it may ſhake their clearing about it; often at death it comes to be as it was with *Joſeph*'s Brethren, when he is giving order to bind them, and they looked for nothing but death, all this is come on us, ſay they, becauſe we heard not the cry of our brother. It's obſerved, that we never read a word ſince the day that he was let down into the pit, that any of them was challenged for it, and when they are in *Egypt*, they cannot diſcern *Joſeph* to be their Brother, nor can they have any hope from him; the reaſon is, they had not repented for letting him down into the Pit; readily un-repented guilt has great influence on the doubting of ones intereſt in the Covenant at Death; however *David* was guilty of Murther & Adultery, yet he penned the 51. *Pſ.* and had his bones broken for it, therefore at death he can ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, &c. 3. One comes to be darkned in their intereſt in the Covenant, when either by Gods providence, or their apprehenſion, there ſeems to be an inconſiſtency with the Promiſes of the Covenant; take for inſtance *Joſiah*, there is a ſpecial Promiſe made to him by *Huldah* the Propheteſs, when he ſends to her, after the reading of the Law, (Thou ſhalt go to thy grave in peace, before the Captivity come on) who would have thought that *Joſiah* would die in Battel, and be killed by *Pharaoh-Necho*, in the valley of *Megiddo* after he had ſuch a Promiſe? Take again for inſtance the fifth Command, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* And yet many are taken away in the ſtrength and vigour of their youth, they can hardly reconcile the Providence and the Promiſe, or then it is ſo in their apprehenſion; our diſcouraged Spirits at Death, are like theſe that look through black ſpectacles, we miſconſtrue Providence, every thing appears black through theſe Spectacles, while it's white. Now readily one of theſe three, either ſome un repented guilt, or ſome Providence at Death, that ſeems not to agree with the Promiſe, or

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the abſolute Soveraignty of God, may produce a great cloud about ones intereſt in the Covenant, when they are at their laſt words; yet notwithſtanding of both theſe Cautions, the point holds firm, that its a great encouragment at death, eſpecially to be able to aſſert an intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant.

To confirm this in general, I will ſpeak a word to theſe three. 1. I deſire ye may take notice of the Tenor of the Covenant 2. Take a view of the knowledge of an intereſt in this Covenant: And 3. I ſhal conſider both the Covenant, and an intereſt in it, as tryſting with death, and a Believers laſt words, & theſe three will diſcover what a priviledge an intereſt in that Covenant is, when it's diſcerned at death. *Firſt*, Take a view briefly of the Tenor of the Covenant. 1. The Covenant is a Tranſaction betwixt God & man, about mans greateſt concernments, it concerns his Soul, & that is the choiceſt part of him, it concerns his Eternity, nay, the Covenant, as ye will hear, it concerns two Worlds, this preſent World, and that which to is come, for godlineſs has the Promiſe of this Life, and that which is to come; the Covenant concerns the Soul, & the greateſt intereſts of the Soul, it is only theſe Covenanted, that can reach the Souls Intereſt; he was indeed a fool, that thought he could tell his Soul good news, on the account he had his barns full, *Soul, take thee reſt, for thou haſt enough laid up for many years*, It was good news to his Ox or his Aſs, but to tell it to his Soul, he was a fool, & the Scripture terms him ſo; for its only theſe Covenanted things that concern the Soul. 2. Take notice, that infinite wiſdom has contrived the Covenant, to be the only way of Conveyance of intereſts, the great intereſt of the Soul, the Juſtification of it, the Adoption of it, the Sanctification of it, the fellowſhip of it with Jeſus, the glorifying of it eternally, they come in to the Soul no other way but by the Covenant; they that talk of meriting for it, or working for it, or buying of it, they do not underſtand what they ſay; the Covenant holds out the greateſt intereſts, and the only way of attaining them, and coming by them, is in the Covenant way. 3. Not only does this Covenant hold out the greateſt intereſt, God cannot make greater Promiſes than he hath made to the Soul,

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he cannot promiſe greater things than himſelf, and there is no other way for attaining them, than by the Covenant. So in the third place, the Covenant gives ſufficient Security for them, to ſpeak with reverence, God becomes a Debtor by vertue of his Covenant; I confeſs there are many Divines that ſay, they like not the word, that God ſhould be debtor to Man, they think it below his Glory & Majeſty, yet they cannot deny, but he is a Debtor in a twofold ſenſe. 1. He is Debtor to his own faithfulneſs, *If we believe not, yet he abides faithful, he cannot deny himſelf*; it is not ſaid, if we believe not, *he cannot deny us*, but if we believe not, *he cannot deny himſelf*, he is Debitor to himſelf. 2. It's not denied, but he is Debitor to Chriſt, for all the Promiſes of the Covenant are firſt made to Chriſt, & through Chriſt they come to be ours, as ye ſaw a man that makes over his inheritance to his Son, & the Son Marrying a Woman, it comes to be the Womans through the Son, ſhe has right to it, becauſe of Marrying the Man: The Father is principallie, if not properlie Debitor to Chriſt, for all the Promiſes of the Covenant, & he becomes Debitor to us, & our Right to them is like the Womans Right, though the Father did not make over the Right firſt, and principally to her, but to the Son, yet ſhe has a right to them, becauſe of Marrying the Son: Some may ſcruple at that, he is a Debitor to us, but he is both a Debitor to his faithfulneſs, & to his Son, ſo that our right to the Promiſes comes to be unqueſtionable, & as fullie ſecure, as if God were a Debitor to us, & if he alter the Promiſes, he muſt both denie himſelf & his Son; O! what a mercie is it in ſuch a ſtrait as death is, to have the Promiſes in ſo great aſſurance. Now taking up the Covenant in theſe three reſpects, O! what ſpecial encouragment muſt it be at Death, when all things are bidding us adieu, to have our great intereſt by ſuch a way of conveyance, ſo ſecured, as the Father muſt both denie himſelf and his Son, before our Right to them be contradicted.

Secondly, Our priviledge to have an intereſt in the Covenant at Death will appear, if ye take notice what the knowledge of an intereſt in the Covenant is: I denie not but there may be an intereſt in the Covenant, God may have made a Covenant with us, and we know

know not of it, yet conſider what a Priviledge the knowledge of an intereſt in the Covenant is, & I will open this in three things. 1. The knowledge of our intereſt in the Covenant, is that which renders it uſeful for us, in all the commanded Duties of the Law; take for inſtance, if ye be called to believe, or love God, which is the ſum of the Law, the readie way a Believer hath to perform this dutie is to ſearch out ſome Promiſe, & to lay it before God: But unleſs they know their intereſt in the Covenant, with what cheerfulneſs & confidence can they go to the Promiſes? I will not ſay, as I find a certain Divine ſay, I thought it a hard word, that a perſon to love Chriſt that is not in Covenant with him, is like a woman lying with another womans Husband, it's a kind of adultery, to love the perſon ye are not in Covenant with; but yet the great encouragment to improve the Promiſe, in order to performing duties is, to know the Covenant to be ours, otherwiſe with what confidence & hope can we plead the promiſe of help in Prayer. 2. The knowledge of our intereſt in the Covenant is exceeding uſeful to bear off all temptations: the great Anſwer to challenges and fears is, we are not under the Law, but under Grace; the truth is, as a Divine obſerves, the moſt part of our temptations and challenges, they come from the Law, the threatnings, the curſes, the commands of the Law, but the Tempter brings not our Bond againſt us, he charges a Believer with a Bond, that he is not lyable to, & the great Anſwer we have to them all, is, we are not under the Law, but under grace; this is the way to bear off challenges, when he preſſes with ſuch a Debt, thou haſt broken all the precepts of the Law, and thou art lyable to all the curſes thereof; we may Anſwer, thou haſt taken the wrong Bond; for we are not under the Law, but under Grace. 3. The knowledge of our intereſt in the Covenant lets us ſee our dutie; there are a number of Duties, that we are called to do, that ordinarly we lay quite by, becauſe of the want of the knowledge of our intereſt in the Covenant, ſuch as rejoycing in God, delighting in God, & they are the duties that are likeſt Glory, and yet for all the commands given about them, becauſe of the want of the knowledge of our intereſt in the Covenant, we neither

ther can rejoyce, nor delight in Him.

Thirdly, That at all times, & in all caſes, the knowledge of our intereſt in the Covenant, is moſt neceſſary at death, when like *David* we come to ſpeak our laſt words; it's true, it's neceſſary through the whole courſe of our life, but never more neceſſar than at death, eſpecially if ye take death up under a twofold formality. 1. Death is the thing that parts us and all other things, a man then quiets his inheritance, by death he loſes his legal right to it, ſo that if there were a poſſibility he could come back again, he would find that death had taken away his property to it, death has taken away the property from Lands, it looſes the relation to the Husband, to the Wife, to the Children; it parts all, a man then muſt give up all his Writs and Lands to another, and his Right to them will be as legal as if they were made over by Diſpoſition; O how refreſhing will this be then, that God will be theirs, & glory theirs. 2. Death, as it diſſolves all unions & relations made for lifetime, it takes away a mans Right to his inheritance, the Woman is no more bound by the marriage-covenant to her Husband, Death hath looſed the Contract, ſo Death comes as a curſe, it was inflicted in the beginning as a curſe, when God curſed the man & the ſerpent; now a title to this Covenant makes the thing that was a curſe a bleſſing; it's now, *Bleſſed are they that die in the Lord; & all things are yours, & ye are Chriſts.* 3. Conſider Death, as it's the March-ſtone betwixt time & eternity, we ſtand as it were on the March-ſtone; when we are going to die, we are going from the one into the other; now a Title to the everlaſting Covenant, when we ſtand on the top of the ſtone & bids adieu to Sun, & Moon, Husband, & Wife, to Children, to Lands, & Poſſeſſions, to bid them all adieu, and claim to an intereſt in the Covenant, & to all the Priviledges of it, what a ſpecial encouragment is this? When a man is making his Teſtament, he puts in nothing to himſelf, his Lands & Poſſeſſions muſt go to others, or to his friends, & he has nothing to himſelf; it's remarkable, *Jacob* when he was dying, he calls all his Children, & gives them all Legacies, when he was making his Teſtament, but he puts in ſomething for himſelf, in one little verſe in *Gen.* 49. *Lord I have waited for thy ſalvation*; ſo that if ye will take a view of the Covenant,

as it contains the great concernments of time & eternity, & what a priviledge it is to have an intereſt in it; he that made us out of nothing, might have commanded us all duties that he has commanded, & annexed no more, but if ye do not theſe duties, I will eternally damn you, & caſt you into hell, and ye ſhal drink of the lake of Fire and Brimſtone, ſo long as I am God; but ſo condeſcending has grace been, that God hath been content to tranſact thus Covenant-ways, and among the reſt ye have this, if any keep my Commandments, he ſhal have my peace, my pardon, nay more, he ſhal have my ſelf, nay more he ſhal have my Son, & my ſelf for all eternity; now, to have a Title to this everlaſting Covenant, when we are giving up with all our Lands and Poſſeſſions, & death is looſing all Relations, and when we are meeting with that, which is a curſe in it ſelf, then to be able to ſay, *yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, &c.

SERMON II.

2 *Samuel* 23. *Verſe* 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

THeſe are the laſt words of *David* the ſon of *Jeſſe*, the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*; many excellent Pſalms had he penned, and many ſweet ſongs had he ſung, but like the nightingal, that they ſay ſings ſweetlieſt before his death, he reſerves this ſong to be ſung among his laſt words; *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, &c. I propoſed this general Obſervation from the ſcope of the words, *That the great encouragement at death and when we come to ſpeak our laſt words is, an intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant.* I confirmed this from the Tenor of the Covenant, the advantages of an intereſt in it, & from the tryſting of theſe two together with the time of death, I will

will only clear one Queſtion, & ſo apply this Point.

Queſt. It may be Queſtioned, Is not Chriſt the great encouragment of the Soul, when we come to ſpeak our laſt words, and why do we aſcribe this to the Covenant? I thought it neceſſary to clear this in the entry of this noble Theme, which I will do with theſe two conſiderations.

Anſ. 1. It were a very great injury to take from Chriſt, and give to the Covenant what is his due: all the luſtre of the Covenant is like the Moon that borroweth its light from the Sun; the Moon would be but a dark Planet, except it had light derived from the Sun; ſo all the luſtre and excellency of the Covenant flows from Chriſt.

And I will open here a four-fold reference that Chriſt hath to the Covenant. 1. He was the Purchaſer of it, for as much grace as there is in the Covenant, there is not a Promiſe in it, but it is bought, and bought at the full value; how free ſoever it be to us, they were not ſo to our Cautioner, but all the Promiſes of Peace, of Pardon, of Sanctification, they ſtood him the price of his Blood, and ſo he is he purchaſer of the Covenant. 2. He was the Mediator of the Covenant, he treated it, and in effect drew the Articles of it; the Father, when the Covenant was a treating, he knew he had to do with fools, that could not, nor had no skill of their own Write drawing, the Son was the fit perſon concerned in both parties, therefore he had a liberty from the Father, to draw the Articles of the Covenant as he pleaſed, which he did in one of the ſtrangeſt ways: he ſatisfies the Father, and abundantly ſatisfies us, and it was difficult to ſatisfie both Parties, but he took the difficulty on himſelf, therefore he is called *Heb.* 12. Among the many honourable names he gets in the Bible, he gets this, *Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant*: 3. He is the ſurety of the Covenant; *Heb.* 7. *In ſo much as he was the ſurety of a better Teſtament*, He is the Surety, the Cautioner of a better Covenant; Therefore I will offer two things in reference to this, 1. He is the Cautioner for our part of the Covenant. 2. For the Fathers part of the Covenant. It is well Obſerved by one, he had to do with a party that had three defects, when he made the Covenant, Firſt,

That we were Dyvors, and not Reſponſable, and therefore behoved to have a Cautioner. Secondly, They were witleſs, and had no skill to draw their own Writs, and therefore left it to the Son to draw the Covenant. Thirdly, they were unbelievers, and readily would not take him at his word, therefore he wrote the Covenant in the blood of his Son, and gave him to be Executor of all the things contained in the Covenant, and that he had promiſed, and is in a manner Surety for him, therefore ye have Chriſt often telling his Diſciples, that they needed not doubt of his Fathers part of the Covenant, for he had given him all power in Heaven and Earth, for performing & accompliſhing the Covenant, ſo he is ſurety for us.

Queſt. Ye will ask, What hath he undertaken for us? I will have occaſion to ſpeak of this afterward, but I will tell you two things he hath undertaken?

Anſw. 1. To get our conſent to the Covenant. *All that the Father hath given me ſhall come unto me*, that is to ſay, they ſhall imbrace the Covenant; indeed this was a great undertaking, and that he may be true to that truſt, he ſends his Word to reveal the Covenant, his Rod to preſs it, his Spirit to perſuade to imbrace it. 2. He has undertaken to pay all our failings, otherways the Father could not deal with us, for we are Dyvors: and *Adam* when he was perfect, the Father knew in the ſtate of innocency, what it was to truſt man without a Cautioner; ſo he undertakes to the Father, that we ſhall give our conſent, and for any failing or tranſgreſſion, he ſhall be comptable for it, and it ſhall be on his ſcore.

And Laſtly, he is the Subſtance of the Covenant, he is the marrow, the very marh of the Covenant, therefore all the Promiſes of the Covenant are nothing elſe but the execution of his three Offices, all the promiſes of Pardon, & of Peace, are the execution of his Prieſtly Office; all the promiſes of Teaching & Guiding, are the execution of the Promiſes of his Prophetical Office; all the promiſes of Ruling, Defending, and Subduing our Enemies, are the execution of his Kingly Office; So all the promiſes of the Covenant, are but Chriſt, repreſenting himſelf as King, Prieſt and Prophet of his Church: So to take from Chriſt and aſcribe to the Covenant, would be very injurious to God, for he is the Purchaſer, the Mediator, the Surety,

Surety, and Substance of it. *Secondly*, To answer the Question; The doing of this is no injury to Christ, to say that when we are at our last words, the great encouragement is the Covenant, no more than to ascribe to the Rayes of the Sun, or the pipe or conduit that convoys the water from the fountains, that we are warmed with the Rayes of the Sun, or that we are Quenched by the Water, that comes from the pipe; for this derogats nothing either from the Sun, nor from the Spring; so this derogats nothing from Christ, to say that our great encouragement at death comes from the Covenant, for Christ is the Spring, and the Covenant is the conduit that convoyes the water from the Spring; and Christ is the Sun, and the Covenant is but the Rayes that comes from the Sun, both it's heat and it's Rayes comes from this Sun? and this is necessary in two cases. 1. To shew that sometimes in desertion when he hides, or withdraws, or frowns, all the Promises, and all the Ministers, yea if Angels should Preach, they will not prove conducible for an outgate, or for scattering terrors; the reason is, the Pipe cannot communicat water without the Spring, and the Rayes cannot communicat heat without the Sun; it's remarkable, 2 *Kings* 4. When the *Shunammites* child died, the Prophet *Elisha* sent his servant, and his staff, but the child remained dead, until the Prophet came himself: so the Covenant, and all the Promises abstracting from Christ, if they were in the mouth of Angels, cannot be an encouragement, until he come himself: conferences and discourses bringing reasons, convincing reasons from the Covenant, from the freedom, from the fulness of it, will not bring one from desertion, until he come himself.

On the other hand, It's necessary to rebuke them, that catch a Promise of the Covenant, and will feed upon it, and say, they will come to Glory, and God has made a Covenant with them, and God has made a Promise to them, and yet has no interest in Christ, it's even as ye saw a man coming through a Garden, and he claughts a Branch of an Apple-tree, and he goes and lays it in his Chest, and expects he will have Fruit of it in the Spring; But the Branch cannot bring forth Fruit, except it abide in the Root; so what we say of encouragement among our last words from the Covenant, it derogats nothing

from Chriſt, more than a man ſhould glory of ſuch an Apple-tree, I plucked Apples, it derogats nothing from the Tree; for abſtract the Branch from the Root, it will bear neither leaves nor Apple; ſo the point holds true, that the only encouragement when we are going to die is from the everlaſting Covenant.

Uſe 1. For Application, *Firſt*, Is this the great encouragement, when we will be at our laſt words, and we will be there ere it be long, an intereſt in the Covenant, it ſerves to reprove thoſe who are ſeeking their encouragement elſe where, ſome take their encouragement in Life and Death from the World, (Soul, take thee reſt, thou haſt enough laid up for many years) as one obſerves well, he might als well laid down a Promiſe for his Body to feed on, as to lay down enough for his Soul to feed on: ſome has common convictions, ſome has moral qualifications, and poſſibly ſome go a little higher, but all theſe ſeek their water out of gutters, and come not to the right Barrel for the wine; the great encouragement is the Covenant, and an intereſt in it,

Queſtion, Before I go any further in this *Uſe*, I will clear this practical Queſtion, How ſhall a perſon know, and by what Rules ſhall they try, if they make their great encouragement to be the Covenant of God? *Anſwer*, For opening this a little I deſire you may take notice, that the Covenant takes in two things, Promiſes and Duties: now if we would try, if the Covenant will be our great encouragement, or if we make it our great encouragement, we muſt firſt caſt an eye to the Promiſe, and then to the Duty. 1. Then, for the Promiſes, the deſign of them being to exalt Grace and Chriſt, a Perſon may examine and find, if they bring in their greateſt Conſolation from the Covenant, in theſe Three or Four caſes.

Firſt, When they are cheerful, not ſo much on the account of the poſſeſſion of promiſed Mercies, as on the right to the Mercies; there are many indeed if they get ſenſe, & if they get the accompliſhment of any Promiſe, they preſently are ready to be much cheered againſt Death and Terrors, ay but remove that, they can lay no weight on the Covenant it ſelf; it's indeed a deſirable thing to have our hands full, & the ſenſible accompliſhment of promiſed Mercies, but when Perſons want that poſſeſſion, & they lay

lay no weight on the Covenant it ſelf, and on a right to it, this is to bring in your Conſolation from your Enjoyment, rather than from the Covenant. It's remarkable, *Song* 2. The Bride is in a deſerted caſe, and what hath ſhe to keep up her heart under all deſertions in that Chapter, *My beloved is mine, and I am his*; Her right to the Covenant, and intereſt in it, even when there is a cloud betwixt him and her, makes her ſing, & in that ſhe is encouraged: So that when we have no enjoyment to crack of, but readily diſcouragements from the want of them, then to be cheerful, it looks like one that brings in their Conſolation from the Covenant of God. 2*ly*. When one can, notwithſtanding of guilt, be comforted from the Covenant, this proves a great evidence of ones making the Covenant their great encouragement many a time; and no wonder, guilt is a humbling thing, no wonder it fill the Soul with Terrors from God, for he abhors it, yet when one can, notwithſtanding of guiltineſs, if the Temptation and the Challenge they meet with, ſay, thou haſt broken this Command, and a Second, and a Third, & there is not one of them, if God pitch on it, but God may condemn thee for; go and tell the Tempter, ye take the wrong Bond, I am not under that Covenant, I am under a better Covenant where the Debt is to be required of the Surety, and my work is to go to him for pardon, when challenges and the ſmell of guiltineſs makes them not caſt away their hope, but tell the Tempter, it's not your Bond, there is a pardon to be gotten on the account of the Righteouſneſs of another; That is one Evidence, that thou bringeſt in thy Encouragement from the Covenant, according to the deſign of the Covenant, when notwithſtanding of the want of *Senſe* from the Covenant thou ſticks by it. 3*ly*. They rightly improve the Covenant for encouragement that ſometimes take their guilt, as an Argument to preſs on God the accompliſhment of the Promiſe, the thing that chaſes one from him, as *Peter*, *Depart from me for I am a ſinful man*, yet he hangs by the Covenant, and will make it an errand to run to him, and an argument to preſs it on him, *Pſal.* 14. 4. *v. I ſaid, Lord, be merciful to me, heal my ſoul, for I have ſinned againſt thee*; Nay more, *Pſal.* 25. *Pardon mine iniquity*, and his argument is, *for it is very great*. What kind of reaſoning is this?

Any

Any would think, of all the impertinent grounds to bring to God this were one, but take right measures by the Covenant, it's no *Antinomian* principle, *The your iniquities were as scarlet, they shall be white as wool, though you have played the harlot with many lovers*; it's not we, but the Mediator has put in these things in the Covenant, and payed the Price abundantly above the value of them. 4*ly*. One comes to evidence their encouragement to come in from the Covenant, when they make use of Providence always with a reference to the Covenant; all Providences are by them looked on always with a reference to the Covenant: Now there are four influences, that a Believer will find in Providences to encourage men, for if ye measure Providence by the Covenant. 1. The Covenant is a key to open the Mystery of the Providence, readily ye may come under a Lash or a stroke from God, and be at that *Rebecca* was at, *If I be so, why am I thus*? The Covenant will open the Providence, ye will find that in Faithfulness he hath corrected you, ye will find, that ye could as easily want your meat as a Rod, if he be faithful to his word. 2*dly*. It Evidences the Wrath and Curse of the Providence to be removed, one is laid low, & another back by a Feaver, or a Consumption, but they have Dregs and all, for they have no Interest in the Covenant: But for thee who art interested in the Covenant, the Cautioner as to thee, in the Covenant, has sucked out all their Cups; he that brings in his Consolation from the Covenant, he first takes the Covenant as a key to open the Providence, & then he sees all the Poyson & Gall that was in his neighbours cup, is sucked out by the Cautioner of the Covenant, as a noble way to keep up hope under the darkest Providence: Was there any so darkned as *Abraham* was? The Lord seems to be very kind to him, he converses with him, & he promises, I will give thee Seed, and in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed; and the next day he bids him go to Mount *Moriah* and offer his Son *Isaac*, the Seed of the Promise, in a burnt-offering unto the Lord; would any body have thought, who would take such a way, one day to make a Promise, and another day to cast it down? he took it not as one casting away his Promise, for he knew that he was faithful that had promised, therefore he went and put his hand to the knife to kill him: So

when

when we take Providences, and look on them with a proſpect to the Covenant, we have a Key to open the Myſtery of the Providence; and if ye would have a ſure Rule to try, if ye be bringing in your conſolation from the Promiſe, and from the Covenant, try how much ye can rely on the credit of a Promiſe againſt Providence, ſenſe challenges for Guilt, and notwithſtanding of them all, to cleave to a Promiſe. But 2*ly*. That they ſhould try, if they bring in their encouragement from the Covenant, they muſt alſo look to the Command; theſe things would appear a plauſible Doctrine, and an *Antinomian* would imbrace them all, to hear a Miniſter preaching that againſt ſenſe, and all the darkneſs of Providence, there ſhould be adherence to the Covenant, but there muſt be an eye to the commanding part, and a perſon is bringing in his encouragement from the Covenant, that doth theſe three things from the commanding part. 1. Every Command hath a ſuitable Promiſe, and ay when he has a call to obey the Command, a Believer has alſo a call to run to the Promiſe; wherever ye are called to pray, if two or three were met together in Chriſts Name, if ye were viſiting a ſick Perſon. or if ye were going about your own particular caſe to God, if ye have a call to the Duty, ye have likewiſe a call to the Promiſe, which is neceſſar to be obſerved; and the neglect of it makes many heartleſs Duties, when we labour to bring out of our own Gifts the qualifications of the Duty, we bring forth the things that is not there-ben; wherever ye can inſtruct that God puts ſuch a Duty on you, let it be to do, or to ſuffer, the ſame call from the Command, calls for the promiſing Part of the Covenant, and he is not rightly improving the Covenant for conſolation, that runs not to the Promiſe, when he has a call to the Duty, like a man rowing a Boat, if ye roll with one Oar, it will go continually about, and make no progreſs, but if ye roll with both the Oars, it makes the Boat go even, and makes ſwift progreſs; ſo when we go to the commanding part without the promiſing part, we roll but with one Oar. 2*ly*. He uſes the commanding Part of the Covenant for his encouragement, that is, he is as tender of his Obedience, as he is tender of his Comfort: It is a Queſtion ſome Divines move, whether is Sanctification or Conſolation

lation moſt neceſſary? All determine that Sanctification is neceſſary for our being, but Conſolation is only neceſſary for our well-being; we may go to Heaven, and have very little of comfort, but we cannot go to Heaven without Sanctification; and he is rightly laying the Foundation, to have the Covenant his encouragement, when he comes to his laſt Words, that is minding the commanding Part, and Duties in the Covenant, as well as the promiſing Part, nay that is rather bound to the commanding Part, than the promiſing Part: for we may go to Heaven without conſolation, but we muſt go to the Pit if we want Sanctification. 3ly. He uſes the commanding Part of the Covenant for his encouragement, that minds the whole Commands of the Covenant, and is not partial in the Commands of the Covenant, he that is partial in the Commands of the Covenant, does as a man that goes into a Garden, and he plucks a Flower here, and another there, and paſſes by the reſt; no, we muſt have a reſpect to all the Commands, whether ye be Maſter or Servant, Land-lord or Tennent, Buyer or Seller, the Commands of the Covenant muſt regulat you in your Families, in the Mercats, in your change-houſes, in your work, and in your Shops, and in all the things that ye go about; & he that would have the Covenant his encouragement, muſt roll the command and the Promiſe together, and muſt be as tender of the command, as of the Promiſe, and muſt have a reſpect to all the commands; and he that can make uſe of the Covenant in all theſe reſpects, whether he have ſenſe or not, ſuch a one, when he comes to his laſt words, and muſt be quiting with all his Relations, and all his Lands, and Chartors, he will have a ſpecial ground to ſing *Davids Nightingale* ſong, The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, *&c.*

Uſe 2. But there are other two *Uſes* yet remaining, the 1ſt. is this, To encourage Believers to learn to make uſe of the covenant, make more uſe of the Covenant than ye do, I know it's the ground of deſpondency and heartleſs worſhipping of God, either we believe not, or we do not improve the Covenant, and how many are there guilty of both, when they come in ſtraits, and when there is a command from God, or a croſs from Men; they are ready to go, like a Woman with her hands on her Loins,

Loins, they cannot ſing, that the Covenant is full, and ſure, and free.

Queſt. 1. I would excite thee O Chriſtian with three Queſtions about it, 1. I ask you, is there any thing out of the Covenant that ye would have in, or is there any thing in that ye would have out? No, there is not one Syllable; I like the Obſervation ſome has made of the Covenant, if we had been altogether, and had all our heads laid together, there is not one Syllable out that ſhould have been in, and in that ſhould have been out; what is there, what diſeaſe, what condition of Life, if thou were acquaint with the Covenant, that thou would not find abundantly ſatisfied within the Covenant? So that we may ſay of it, as that word, *Song* 7. 13. *At our gates are all manner of pleaſant things, new and old, which I have laid up for my well Beloved.* Some take that as relating to the Covenant, are there not all manner of pleaſant fruits to be found in the Covenant; but I ask thee, what aileth thee? is there any thing out that thou would have in, or in that thou would have out? is there any caſe or difficulty but this Covenant will ſatisfie it? why then is your countenance ſad? but 2*ly*. Ye will ſay, the Exception runs not againſt the fulneſs of the Covenant, but againſt the freedom of it, there are many conditions in the Covenant, ſay ye; but I tell you, there is no condition in the Covenant, but one, even ſuch as if a Man were going to marry a Woman, and ſhe ſhould ſay, I am poor and have no Tochergood; he will tell, that ſhall not hinder the Marriage; but ſays ſhe, but I am black; but I am fair, ſays he, and I will make thee fair through my comlineſs; but ſays ſhe, I will not marry thee, except thou be content to give me leave to be a whore; the truth is, the Covenant is ſo ordered in the point of freedom, it's not our blackneſs, or poverty, that hinders it; they have no ground to except againſt the marriage, but becauſe the Bridegroom will not give them liberty to be a whore; no, he has drawn it in theſe terms, that all bygones ſhall be bygones, and fair play in times to come; *Thou haſt played the whore with many lovers, and ſee whom thou haſt not lyen with under every green tree, on every high hill, yet return unto me; let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought, and he will abundantly pardon.* But 3*ly*. Ye will

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ſay, your conſolation is houghed without the ſureneſs of the Covenant; I will only ſay this, God may indeed act contrair to the Covenant of nature, and yet not be unfaithful; he may make the iron to ſwim, he may make the Moon go back ten degrees, and the Sun ſtand ſtill, he may make the *Babyloniſh* Fire, not to burn the three Children that were caſt into it; but if he ſhould alter one Article in the Covenant, or not accompliſh one Promiſe in the Covenant of Grace, he behoved to deny himſelf and his Son, for he is become ſurety in the Covenant, and all power in Heaven and Earth is committed to him, to execute the Articles of this Covenant; for it's in a manner written with his Sons Blood, and ſo why go ye with your hands on your Loins, ye that have any Title or Intereſt in the Covenant, for it's both Full, Free, and Sure.

SERMON III.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Took from the Scope of the Words the laſt day, one Obſervation, and handled it in two Sermons, *That the great Encouragement at Death, was an Intereſt in a well orderd and ſure Covenant.* What was ſaid of that, I will not repeat now, but I come particularly, to make ſome entry on the words, and in the Work of this day I ſhall conſider them in this mould and method, and ye have in them five things. 1. Ye have the nature of the thing, which ſupports *David* when he was at his laſt Words, it was *a Covenant*, he is ſupported by a Covenant. 2*ly*. Ye have the Parties Tranſacting in this Covenant, God and me, *God has made with me a Covenant.* 3*ly*. Ye have the properties of this Covenant, and they are Three, it's *everlaſting*, it's *ordered in all things, and it's ſure*; Three remarkable Properties. 4*ly*. Ye have the Superſtructure, or that which *David* builds on this Covenant, that has theſe three Properties,

perties, and two things he builds on it, *First*, his Salvation. *Secondly*, Satisfaction to all his desires, *And this is all my salvation, and all my desire*, The Lord hath made with me a Covenant, and it's everlasting, it's ordered in all things, and it's sure, and I build on it all my Salvation, and all my desire. 5*ly*. Ye have the Anticipation of two Objections against Gods entring in Covenant with *David*, one upon God's part and another on his part. *First* for *David's* part he was a sinful man, guilty of Murther, Adultery, and Lying, and many things, and he had Incest in his house, would God make an everlasting Covenant with the like of him? Another Objection might have been made, God crost him, and Providence looked not like such a Covenant. To remove these two Objections, ye have two *Altho's* in the *verse*, There is one in the beginning of the *verse*, another in the end, *Altho my house be not so with God, and altho he make it not to grow*, so these two *Altho's* remove two great difficulties, that might be brought against the consolation of the everlasting Covenant; ye may see here a large Field and a Marrowy, that I resolve to dwell on possibly longer than on any one *Verse* in the Bible, and I beseech you not only pray for help, but carefully to observe, what shall be said, either of the Covenant, or personal covenanting, or of the Properties and grounds of Encouragement, *All my desire, and all my Salvation.*

To begin with the First of these, the nature of the thing which supports *David* at his last words, it's a Covenant, the word in the Hebrew *Berith*, though all agree to render it *Covenant*, yet there are many differences about the Root of it, some deriving it from one word, some from another, it answers to the Greek διαθηκη, which we have translated in the Scripture sense Testament, the Covenant and Testament being one thing, so the old and new Testament, they are in effect in the nature of them, the old and new Covenant: but I resolve not to dwell on it in the general, I will only take this Observation, and so far as I can win through it, follow it in the work of this day.

Doct. The Observation shall be this, *That the consolation of a Believer comes not from a command, nor from a naked Promise, but it comes from the Covenant.* The Lord has made with

with me a Covenant, it is not ſaid, the Lord *commanded* me a Covenant, nor is it ſimply, the Lord has *promiſed* me, but the Lord hath made with me a Covenant.

Before I come either to confirm or improve this Truth practically, there are two or three general conſiderations I muſt give you, to open and be a Key unto what is to be ſpoken on this head: It is neceſſary ye know firſt, what a Covenant is. Heathens, Chriſtians, Lutherans, Jeſuites and Proteſtants have written large Tractats of the nature of a Covenant.

It is neceſſary that I glance a little at the opening of four things, that all agree in to make up a Covenant, and the four laid together make up the Definition of a Covenant. 1. In a Covenant there muſt be diſtinct Parties. A man may make a Promiſe or Vow his alone, binding himſelf, but he cannot make a Covenant alone, a Covenant neceſſarly ſuppoſes diſtinct Parties; neither find we in Sacred or Eccleſiaſtick, or prophane Hiſtories, mention of any thing, that ever went under the name of a Covenant, but on ſuppoſed diſtinct Parties. 2*ly*. A Covenant ſuppoſes an agreement betwixt thir diſtinct Parties, the Parties treat and they agree on ſome Articles and Heads, and both of them come under conditions; it is true there are covenants of exact Juſtice, and there are Covenants of Grace: and according to the nature of the Covenant ſo is the Agreement, and the condition of the Covenant, but there is nothing more neceſſary and eſſential, to the making up of a Covenant, than two Parties agreeing on ſuch and ſuch conditions and terms. 3*ly*. A Covenant ſuppoſes an Obligation on both Parties, to the Tenor of the Agreement and condition, for in effect there cannot be a proper Covenant, but it induces an Obligation and a Bond, ſuppoſe it be either a *Deſpotick* Covenant, as they call it, or ſuppoſe it be a Covenant betwixt Maſter and Servant, or ſuppoſe it be a Covenant for Traffick, or for Marriage; ſuppoſe it be but a Covenant of Friendſhip, yet it is an Obligation on both Parties, on the Terms on which they have agreed, and both of them become engaged to the Articles of the Agreement, by vertue of the Covenant. 4*ly* Ye would notice, that of all Obligations the Obligation of a Covenant is moſt Sacred; therefore it is well obſerved by ſome, the light of nature

nature, nay the very Scriptures themſelves, they cannot deviſe a more inviolable tye than the tye of a Covenant; the great reaſon is, even among Heathens, when they tranſacted Covenants, they would not only draw them in writ, and ſeal them with lifting up their hands, but ſometimes they would do it with drawing blood of their Thumbs and ſealing it with their blood; the Light of Nature cannot deviſe a ſtronger ty, than the ty of a Covenant, when the Covenant is lawful in its materials, no men, nor ſociety of men can louſe the ty of a Covenant, the reaſon is, becauſe the ty of a Covenant binds the conſcience, and there accreſces a Debt to God, becauſe of the Invocation of his Name, and no man can remit that which is due to God, it is God only that can remit a lawful Covenant, ſo ye ſee what a Covenant is, and laying all the four together, ye may ſee what is ſcattered in many Books about the nature of a Covenant, and I will give you this Definition of a Covenant, taking it as it is ſtated betwixt God and Man, *It is an Agreement betwixt God and Man, on certain Articles and Conditions, wherein the moſt ſacred and inviolable tyes are interpoſed, that poſſibly can be imagined, both to bind on God's part, and our part; and God coming under a Covenant with man, and mans coming under a Covenant with God, they come under the moſt ſacred ty, that nature, morality, or grace can find out.*

But I will add a ſecond conſideration to this, which is this, That among all the Wonders that have come to paſs in the World, and ſince the Foundation of the Earth was laid (and there are many wonderful things come to paſs, proving the Wiſdom, Power, Juſtice, and Goodneſs of GOD) yet hardly is there any thing more wonderful than Gods coming under a Covenant with Man, and the things that make it wonderful among many, are theſe two. 1. As he was mans Creator, and gave him a beeing out of nothing, he might have commanded all his creatures, whatſoever he thought fit to command them to do, without any Covenant, he needed have done no more but told them, if ye do not what I command you, I will caſt you in Hell; no Superior, eſpecially being infinitely a Superior, would have done otherwiſe. 2ly. This makes it wonderful, in regard a Covenant ſeems to be a Treaty among equals, it is not ordinary to make

Deſpotick

Deſpotick Covenants, betwixt Princes and Subjects, or Covenants betwixt Maſters and Servants; but betwixt Friends and Equals, or perſons in Marriage, they that come under a Marriage Covenant, ordinarily there is ſome Equality of their blood, or of their Lot; but to come under a Covenant with him, and yet he to be our Maker, *thy Maker is thy Husband*, are words of wonder. Therefore it may be a great Queſtion in the entry of this Theme, What is the reaſon that ſhould move God, who, being mans Maker, and might call for all he could do without a Covenant, to enter into a Covenant with him? It is ſo great a Myſtery, that Mr. *Durham* pens, that there is any proper Covenant of Grace, he ſays, it is ſo far below God, to make a Covenant. There are many Reaſons given, why he hath entred in Covenant with man, and when they have branched them all out, in ſeven, eight, nine, or ten Branches, they reſolve all in Grace, in love in condeſcendency. There can be nothing imagined to induce him to deal with man by covenant but this, it is true man is honoured thereby, and encouraged to do him ſervice, and made inexcuſable by it, if he do him not hearty ſervice, who has been pleaſed to come under a covenant with him, and to abaſe himſelf, and to encourage him in his Service; and when they have branched all the Reaſons in all their Members to the outmoſt, there is nothing that could move ſo great a Lord, to enter in a covenant with ſuch baſe things but allanerly his condeſcendency, his Grace, and his Love, eſpecially if ye take in the Tenor of the covenant, a Covenant on ſuch Terms, that he ſhall take his own Son and offer him up in a ſacrifice, to let us go free; and of all the Acts of Grace, that ever he yet ſhewed, or will ſhew, nay I may ſay more, of all the Acts of Grace he can ſhew, there cannot be a greater.

The third Conſideration that I will give you about this, is, that God has made two Covenants with men, I know indeed there are ſome of our countrey-men ſpeak of three Covenants, ſome of four. *Cameron* a Profeſſor in *Glaſgow* and *France*, is for a Covenant of Nature, Mr *Dickſon* has ſaid much to prove a Covenant of Redemption; the current of Divines reduce them to two Covenants, according to that word, *Gal.* 4. *Which things are*

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an Allegory; for theſe are the two Covenants. I will not debate whether they be two, or three, or four Covenants, the Covenant of Nature, the Covenant of Redemption, the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Grace; I will only ſpeak to the two Covenants, that God has condeſcended to deal with men covenant-ways, and there are at leaſt two ſignal Covenants, the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; I'le not dilate much on the Covenant of Works, for it is the Covenant meaned by the Text that I am on; it would make many Sermons to tell, wherein the Covenant of Works agrees with the Covenant of Grace, and wherein it differs, I will readily have occaſion to hint at it; but this covenant of Works is not the Everlaſting Covenant ordered in all things and made Sure, only becauſe it falls ſo directly in my way, I will clear two Queſtions about the Covenant of Works, and ſhall ſay no more of it, and they are indeed the two greateſt difficulties that ly about it.

Queſt. Firſt it is asked, what evidence is there that God made a Covenant of Works with *Adam*? we find not in all the Book of *Geneſis*, in all the Writings of *Moſes* any thing that would ſeem to confirm this, that there was a Covenant made with *Adam*; there was a command and a Threatning given him, but what ground was there to think, that there was a Covenant made with him.

Anſw. For Anſwer to this, I will not deny, what Mr. *Burgeſſe* acknowledges, that readily *Adam* might ſcarcely know, that he was to bind for him and all his Poſterity; I know not if that can be fully and particularly evinced from Scripture; but that *Adam* came under a Covenant of Works with God, two things will make it appear. *Firſt*, In the New-Teſtament, *Gal.* 4. 23. The tranſaction made betwixt God and *Adam* is called two Covenants, expreſly there meant by the bond-woman and the free; But *2ly.* All the Parties of the Covenant are mentioned in the Book of the *Geneſis*, *Gen.* 2. 16. and 17. Verſes. *Of all the trees of the garden thou mayeſt freely eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die*; Theſe words are a direct Covenant; for, 1. There is a Duty impoſed, *thou ſhalt not eat of it*; and there is a Threatning, *thou ſhalt ſurely die*; the Threatning contains a Promiſe, importing this,

this, ſo long as thou eats not of the tree, thou ſhalt not die; *Adam* upon the other hand accepted this command on thir terms, not only did he not object againſt the terms but accepted them, by taking him to the priviledge of eating all the Trees of the Garden, and when he violat and tranſgreſſed the Command, his conſcience terrified him, and he ſewed fig tree leaves together to hide himſelf from God, the terror of his conſcience imported his condeſcendency to the Command and Threatning; that was a direct Covenant, for all the terms of the Law were written in his heart, and they were con-natural to him, he had them from his creation, he had the Law written in his heart as diſtinctly as we have the ten Commands. Many other things are brought to prove, that it was a diſtinct Covenant of Works made with *Adam* before his fall, and as his tryal was put to the Tree in the midſt of the Garden, and *Moſes* gives us an account of all things of a Covenant, both on God's part and *Adam's* part.

Queſt. 2. I'le clear another difficulty, now after the fall who are the perſons that are under this Covenant of Works made with *Adam*?

For clearing of this, I will only give this one Poſition, *That all natural men, and all that are not effectually called, they are under this Covenant of Works.* I have often had a deſign to follow this point, the reaſons of this are, 1. They are in the firſt *Adam*, there can be no real claim to the Covenant of Grace, until we be intereſted in the Covenant, we can no more plead the priviledges of the Covenant of Grace in a natural ſtate, than a Woman can plead the Articles of a contract, that is not married to the Man; ſhe that has married the man, may claim all the Articles of a contract concerning her; until we be effectually called, and in our effectual calling united to Jeſus, which is but the Articles of the contract of marriage betwixt Chriſt and Believers, we have no more right to the Covenant of Grace, than the woman that has not married the man: this is a moſt dreadful ſtate, for to be under a Covenant of Works admits of no repentance; if a man ſhould mourn as many tears, as there are water in the Sea, if they be under a Covenant of Works, they find no place for Repentance; *Next*, the Covenant of Works admits of

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no Cautioner, a perſon under the Covenant of Works pleading to Chriſt, is like a man preſſing another to pay a Debt, and his Name was never named in the Bond, can a man be cautioner, and his name never named in the Bond; the Covenant of Works admits not of Chriſt for a Cautioner: So he that is in the firſt *Adam* and not effectually united to Chriſt, the Covenant in which he is, admits neither of Repentance, nor of a Mediator; the truth is, to go and diſcourſe to you of this Covenant of Works, of the nature and properties of it, it might draw out a great length; all that I deſign to ſay, is, that there is ſuch a Covenant made with *Adam*, and that all natural men are under it.

4. That I may come to the Covenant mentioned in the Text, *the everlaſting, and well ordered, and ſure Covenant*, I muſt premiſe before I enter on this Covenant, ſome few generals about it, I will name ſome of them now, and follow the reſt in the afternoon.

Firſt, This Covenant has four Names given it in the Bible, and truly all the four do excellently expreſs and open up the nature of it. *Firſt*, it is called a *Teſtament*. *Secondly*, it is called a *Promiſe*, *the Promiſe made to Abraham, this is the Covenant made with Abraham*: *Thirdly*, it is called a *Decree*. And *Laſtly*, it is called a *Covenant*. Now theſe that would rightly take up the Nature of the Covenant, would conſider ſomething of all the four; for in effect we cannot rightly take up the Nature of it, except we ſearch a little in theſe four Names given it.

Firſt, It is called a *Teſtament*, *Heb.* 7. 22. When Chriſt is ſpoken of to be the Mediator of it, he is ſaid to be the *Surety of a better Teſtament*; now the conſideration of it as a Teſtament, renders it exceeding Sweet, I will name but four things in a Teſtament that agrees to a Covenant. 1. a Teſtament it comes not to be valid, except it be ratified with the death of the Teſtator, If the man that makes the Teſtament live, he may revock, or alter it, or turn into another ſtrain than it was; but when his death comes to be interpoſed, all the Legacies left by the Teſtator become firm and valid, and muſt be obeyed; it is a ſacred thing to obey the will of the dead, the light of Nature has made Heathens tremble, at doing contrair to the will of the dead; this Teſtament is Ratified in all the

Articles and clauſes of it, by the death of the Teſtator: this is that which renders it excellent, that the Lord has made the Covenant a Teſtament, and ratified it by the death of the Teſtator; So that we are to ſay of the Covenant as a Teſtament, it's ſtill to be remembred, that there is no alteration to be made now, more than there is of the will of the dead; we are not to contrive new Articles in the Covenant, or to think that any Article in it will not be ſubſcribed; for the Teſtator is dead, and has ratified the Covenant with the death that he did undergo at *Jeruſalem*, in all the Articles of it. 2. It has this as a Teſtament in it, that in effect, in a Teſtament there is no more required but to accept of the Legacies that the Teſtator leaves; it is not like a mans Teſtament, as it's in a Covenant of Traffick, wherein one binds to give ſo much cloath, and the other binds to pay ſo much Money; ordinarly a Teſtament is without ſuch Trafficks; but in the Covenant Legacies are left, and the perſon to whom they are left, it is required of them that they accept; and there is no more required of them, but that they accept; this makes it of the nature of a Teſtament. 3. It has this in it of the nature of a Teſtament, and wherein he exceeds all other Teſtaments, that the Legator leaves Legacies, and he leaves others to give them; but he in the Covenant firſt leaves the Legacies, and then he gives the Legacies; it is remarkable when he is about to die, he calls his Diſciples, and tells them he is going to *Jeruſalem*, and he behoved to die there; It was in his fare well Sermon, and they were much againſt his going, and he tells them, I will leave you a Legacy, *My Peace I leave you*, and he puts in the thing that never man did put in, in any Teſtament, *My Peace I give you*, ſo that it has the nature of a Teſtament in it, conſiſting of Legacies. 4. It has this of a Teſtament, which is alſo ſingular, it is not ordinary in Teſtaments, (Lawyers obſerve that both the Law of Nature, and all other Laws have made againſt it) that men ſhould diſpoſe of an Inheritance by Legacies and Teſtament; the reaſon is, becauſe they think folk when they are dying, are not ſo compoſed, therefore the wronging of Heirs comes to be excepted in diſpoſing of Inheritances; but in this Teſtament, it is not Peace, or Pardon, or Communion with God,

God, that he leaves only, but it is a Teſtament wherein he communicats the Inheritance, without wronging of the Heir; So it has ſometing of a Teſtament in it, it takes in Inheritance as well as Moveables, and ſo it is formally a Teſtament, and therefore the Spirit of God, and the current of Interpreters on the Scriptures thought fit, to call the Scriptures, the Old and New Teſtament, the ſame on the matter with the Old and New Covenants; but I pitch on the name of Teſtament, as it were to ſhew his Latter-Will, both to ſhew what Curſes he leaves, and what Bleſſings he leaves, and the way how to get the one, and eſchew the other; they are confirmed by the Death of the Teſtator, nay, the Heir is rather glorified by the Teſtament, though it take in the Inheritance.

SERMON IV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Have ſhewed you what a Covenant is, *That it is a Sacred Tye among Parties agreed about ſome Article.* There is no Man, nor Society of Men, can looſe the Tyes of a lawful Covenant, but it binds (if it be *vinculum reale*, as they call it) the Perſons and their Poſterity: Moraliſts have acknowledged this, by the light of Nature, demonſtrable by many Arguments. I came to ſpeak of the Covenant of Works, and touched on it in two Heads; *Firſt*, To prove that it was made with *Adam*, and that all the Unregenerat are under it; and in the cloſe, I come to ſpeak of the Covenant of Grace: And the *Firſt* thing about it I reſolved to notice was, the Names given it in Scripture, it is called a *Teſtament*, Heb. 7. 22. *He is Surety of a better Teſtament*, That is, of a better Covenant; I ſhewed you, why it is called a Teſtament, the Teſtator has left Legacies, and he is dead, and the Legacies are of great importance. I will inſiſt no more on this, only

conſidering the Covenant as a Teſtament, I will preſs theſe two things on you.

Uſe Firſt, I would exhort you, to get the Legacies that Chriſt has left in his Teſtament, ye may readily ask, how ſhall we come by theſe Legacies? Ye would hearken to a word of Advice.

Firſt, Underſtand what is left you, I will tell you two things which the Teſtament bears, it bears Tokens and Moveable things, and it bears an Inheritance; his Peace, his Joy, his Conſolation, are indeed moveable and very alterable things, but the Teſtament bears likewiſe an Heritage; for the Law may be diſpenſed with in Chriſt; the reaſon why Juriſts will not admit of a dying Perſon to diſpoſe of Inheritance at Death, they ſuppoſe they will be Roving, and their ſickneſs is diſtempering them: but this cannot be ſuppoſed in Chriſt, therefore his Teſtament bears, *Firſt*, Tokens and Moveables, and then an Inheritance; now the way to know if the Teſtament bear you to the Inheritance is, *Firſt*, To know if the Teſtament bear you to the tokens and moveables, it bears you to his Pardon, his Peace, his Repentance, and Grief for Sin, they are moveables indeed; But if ye be in the Teſtament for ſuch moveables, ye are likewiſe in the Teſtament for the Inheritance; It's remarkable, his Teſtament is not made up of Bleſſings only, but alſo of Curſes, there are many curſes contained in his Teſtament, & ſome get no more in the Teſtament, but like ſome debauch'd Children, when the Father has called them together to make his Teſtament, he gives one his Bleſſing, and a ſecond his Bleſſing, and a third is fallen in Adultery, and he gives him his Curſe, *Jacob* has it ſo in his Teſtament, *Simeon* and *Levi* brethren in evil, curſed be, *&c.*

2ly. I will give you another Direction about the Covenant as a Teſtament, to take hold of things ordinar in Teſtaments, I like the Obſervation one has, writing on the Covenant, he ſays, that a Teſtament ordinarly a Perſon cannot have benefit by it, until it be confirmed by Law, ay but it is not ſo in Chriſts Teſtament, ye muſt take heed that ye do not confirm it by Law, the reaſon of it is, Chriſt hath confirmed it himſelf, for Chriſt to prevent this when he made the Teſtament, ſaid, *My Peace I leave you*; But ſome will ſay, he may leave his

Peace

Peace to us, but we will not get it, until it be confirmed by Law, no, *my Peace I give you*; when a thing is both left and given, it needs no confirmation; there are many gets Legacies left them, and they muſt have them confirmed by Law, but we need no confirmation of the thing that is given, ſo that any that gets a part of this Teſtament, whether it be of the Moveables, or a Title to the Inheritance, if they Queſtion it, until they get it confirmed by Law, they do not know the Nature of this Teſtament, for there needs no more, ſince he both leaves and gives.

3*ly*. In reference to this Name of the Covenant, as it is called a Teſtament, I would give you this Direction, that ye may have a part of his Teſtament, conſider to whom the Legacies in the Teſtament are left, ſometimes in the Teſtament they are ſpoken of as folks that were of kin to Chriſt, they are called his *Brethren*, his *Siſters*, his *Friends*; ſometimes in the Teſtament they are ſpoken of as folks, that *he loved to converſe with*, I ſay unto you my Friends, fear them not that can kill the body, and can do no more, *&c.* ſometimes they are ſpoken of in the Teſtament, as folk that the Father had *given him*; they have many Names in the Teſtament, there are ſome but babes, ſome young Men, ſome Fathers; now I would have you take the Teſtament in the full latitude of it, if ye would feed comfortably on it, whether ye be in kin, or whether ye be Brethren, or Siſters, or in any near Relation, if ye cannot find your Names in the Teſtament under that Notion, go and enquire if there be any friendſhip betwixt you, tho ye be not in Kin, yet folk will leave Legacies to their Friends; if none of theſe will hold, try if ye be Babes, or young Men, there uſes not to be much Friendſhip betwixt Wiſe men and Babes, yet Babes may be in the Teſtament, for the Teſtator may have kindneſs to them on the account of ſome Relation; lay all theſe Names together, to whom the Legacies are left, and if ye find ye have not been a Friend, try if ye be of Kin, if none of theſe will hold, try if ye be Babes; the Father hath given him all power in Heaven and Earth, and it muſt be a rich Teſtament he leaves, and to have a Right to it, we ſhould labour to ſhuffle our ſelves in among them that have a right to this Teſtament; many would ſhuffle

them

themſelves out of this Teſtament, ye ſhould rather conſider what a rich Heir he was that made the Teſtament, and try all the Qualifications and Deſignations of the Perſons to whom the Legacies are left. To be brief, it is a comfortable ſenſe of the whole Covenant, that it is a Teſtament, for it ſtands ratified by the Death of the Teſtator, and if the Father alter any thing of the Covenant, he will alter the Will of the Dead, which looks not like him. This is the firſt Name given to the Covenant, it is a Teſtament ratified by the Death of the Teſtator, and they have a ſecure Legacie, that have an intereſt in the Teſtament, we need not pay for it, for they were not Legacies if we behoved to buy them, we have our Right to them not by Price, but by Teſtament.

The ſecond Name I find the Covenant get in Scripture, it is called a *Promiſe*, ſo we find in *Epheſ.* 2. 2. That at that time ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, and ſtrangers from the *Covenants of Promiſe*; ſo we will find it, *Gal.* 3. 16. and 17. *verſes*, twice called a *Promiſe*; and ye will find it frequently get this Name in Scripture: this Name of a Promiſe added to a Teſtament, is very conſiderable; and there are two things that I will ſpeak a little to here, *Firſt*, Why the Covenant is called a Promiſe. *2ly.* What encouragement a Believer may have, from calling it a Promiſe.

Queſt. Firſt, Why is the Covenant called a Promiſe? There are three or four Reaſons, why the Covenant is called a Promiſe, one of them relates to God, a Second to the Covenant, and a Third to Believers.

Anſw. Firſt, In reference to God, a Promiſe, it is an Act of Dominion, a man that makes a Promiſe, he hath the thing he promiſes under his command, or elſe he promiſes fooliſhly. *2ly.* A promiſe, it is an Act of condeſcendency, he that is content to make a Promiſe, condeſcends to the humour and deſire of them to whom he makes it. *3ly.* A Promiſe is an Act of Liberality; but the main thing here, a Promiſe is an Obligation, it brings a Ty on the perſon that makes it.

Now the truth is, the Covenant is all the Four, in regard of God, it is an Act of his Dominion, of his condeſcendency, of his Liberality, and it brings an Obliga-

tion

ſion on him; but theſe are not the ſpecial Reaſons, why it comes to be called a Promiſe, the ſpecial Reaſons are from the nature of the Covenant, and the nature of the Covenant has two things in it, that makes it properly to be called a Promiſe.

Firſt, The great things in it are Promiſes, it was not ſo with the Covenant of Works, the great things in it were Commands, and therefore ye find it often called in the Bible a *Law*, the Covenant of Works will be called the Law, for the great deſign of it was to give Commands; but it is not ſo with the Covenant of Grace, its not Law and Commands that is not the ſpecial deſign in it, but its Grace and Promiſes. 2*ly*, It comes to be called a Promiſe, in regard there is no Command in it at all, but there is a Promiſe of Strength to obey the Command; ye ſee me ſometimes at Examining, putting you to this, there is no Duty in all the Covenant, but there is a Promiſe relating to that Duty, and if ye remember the Obſervation ye heard the laſt day at Examining, a Chriſtian has never a call to a Command, but in that call, he has a call to the Promiſe; When we are commanded to obey, to do, or to ſuffer, Chriſt never calls us to a Duty in the Covenant, but he calls us likewiſe to a Promiſe of it, whether it be to Prayer, Repentance, Believing, Loving of Chriſt, or ſuffering for Him; So that it comes to be no wonder, that its to be called a Promiſe; for in effect, there is nothing required in all the Covenant, but it is promiſed; Suppoſe there were a man that ſhould bid another man come to his Shop, and buy ſuch a piece of Cloth, and in the mean time ſhould round in his Ear, I will give thee Money to buy it, even as much as the price of it will come to; that is rather a giving, than a ſelling; we indeed buy in the Covenant of Grace, but it is without Money and without Price, and any thing that we part with for the Covenant, it is but that which would undo us; as if ye ſaw a Woman that has a Child, that hath gotten a knife in his hand, and ſhe is fear'd it undo the Child, ſhe will go and Treat with the Child, I will give this Apple, and this pleaſant thing, and that, providing thou wilt quite the knife, ſhe is afraid the child cut his fingers with the knife, or undo himſelf with it, and the Child will not quite it without buying it; the Goſpel drives ſuch a bargain as this, for in the Covenant

of Grace, all that God does in the point of command, is only that we quite the knife that would cut our fingers, and he will give us all the Apples, and pleasant things contained in the Covenant, so it is no wonder it be called a Promise.

3ly. It is called a Promise in regard of us, there are two things in regard of us, that makes it to be called a Promise, and the *Antinomians* will have it called by no other name, they deny it to be a proper Covenant, they say it is only a Promise, but it is in regard of us called a Promise, on thir two accounts, (1.) Because we have contributed nothing to the procuring of the Covenant, but it is allanerly of Grace; as if a Man were sending to his Neighbours house for something he has payed for, he might send for it, and readily crave it as a Debt; but when he sends for any thing promised, he must not go exactly, and observe all the passages of craving it, he had no right to it but by a Promise, many a time when God gives not his people that fulness of Peace, of Joy, of Consolation, that readily they would have, they sit down and quarrel, as readily the thing they would have were payed for; but thy Right to it was but by promise; and a given thing should not be looked in the mouth. 2ly. It comes to be called a Promise, in regard of us, in respect the thing we do in the condition of the Covenant, it is no way proportioned to the thing promised; there are great things promised, and we have no influence on it; What would all our service do to influence this Promise, *I will take away the heart of stone*? What did we contribute, when we first bargained with him, did we not resist the Promise, did we not say, *I will go after my lovers*? What warnings did we sit out, before we brought our necks under this yoke? All these prove that the Covenant is a Promise.

And from this Name of the Covenant, I would have you notice three or four things, before I go further; Is the Covenant called a Promise? Then, 1. Mistake not the Covenant, ye will hear presently, it has another Name nor a Promise, as if it were no way consistent with the Law, *Antinomians* say so, it is a conditional Promise, go not ye to take up the Covenant, as if it were only a Promise, and had no condition at all: I deny not, but there are absolute Promises in it; I will speak of them afterward. But, 2ly. Here the great Encouragement, that

Believers have for their Security, they are under a Covenant, the Name whereof is a Promiſe: Suppoſe one of you were drowned in deſertion, and a ſecond exceedingly weak, and ſuppoſe a third were reproached and deſpicable; yet if ye have from one that has both power and faithfulneſs a Promiſe, that is refreſhing; if one ſhould ask a man that were in great debt, How will ye win out of it? I have a Promiſe, ſays he, ye have no pith nor power to pay your debt, I have a Promiſe from one that is rich, that can pay it: here is the great Encouragement that Believers have, and they have no other thing to keep up their heart, but only this, I have a Promiſe. 3*ly*. I mark it for this end, that I may put thee to the thing I was preſſing the laſt day, to take it up as a Covenant of Promiſes. what am I? ſays one, my Houſe is not ſo with GOD, what am I? ſays another, I have a croſſed life in this World. But will any of theſe hinder him from making a Promiſe? Thy Charter is not Merit, thy Charter and mine is not Purchaſe, but allanerly Promiſes; and the only expectation we can have of wearing the Crown, & walking in the City that hath the twelve Gates, is allanerly Promiſe. If Satan and thy deceitful heart queſtion thy Right, and ſay, Thou deſerves Hell, and thou haſt many marks of going to it; yet if thou have a Promiſe, and a Title to the Man that gives the Contract, and draws the Articles of it, thou may be very ſure, thy Covenant is a Covenant of Promiſe. That is the ſecond Name. The third Name that is given the Covenant, it is called a *Command*; ye have it getting this Name, *Gen.* 17. *Abraham is commanded to circumciſe*, in the tenth *verſe*, *every male child among them*, *this is my Covenant which ſhall be betwixt Me and you*, *and thy Seed after thee*, *every male among you ſhall be circumciſed*, *and ye ſhall circumciſe the fleſh of your foreskin*: If ye compare this with the 13 and 14 *verſes*, *He that is born in thy houſe*, *and bought with thy Money*, *ſhall be circumciſed*, *and my Covenant ſhall be an everlaſting Covenant*; *and the uncircumciſed man child*, *whoſe fleſh is not circumciſed*, *that Soul ſhall be cut off*, he has broken my Covenant, that is my Command: Here ye have the Covenant called under the Name of a Command: and here I would enquire a little into two things, 1*ſt*. Why the Covenant goes under the name of a Command? 2*ly*. How

we

we ſhould improve this Name of the Covenant as a Command.

As to the *Firſt*, It goes under the name of a *Command*, *He hath broken my Covenant*, that is my Command, on theſe two Grounds. 1. The Covenant of Grace, it does not onlie oblige to all the Commands of the Covenant of Works, but to ſome moe, this may ſeem a ſtrange Aſſertion; there is no Command in all the Law, but the Covenant of Grace binds to it, *I came not*, ſays Chriſt, *to deſtroy the Law, but to fulfil the Law*, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, thou ſhalt not ſteal, thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy GOD in vain, thou ſhalt not covet thy Neighbours Goods*, &c. The Covenant binds to all theſe, and to many moe, it binds to Faith in Chriſt, to Repentance, which the Covenant of Works did not; ſo no wonder it be called a Command: for this Covenant binds to all the Duties commanded in the Covenant of Works, and to many moe 2. It comes to go under the name of a Command, it was the ſame Covenant of Grace that *Abraham* had a Seal of in Circumciſion; it's called a Command in regard never were Perſons ſo obliged to obey the Command, as theſe that are taken within the Covenant of Grace: The taking of us within the Covenant of Grace, is like a Woman Married, that is more obliged againſt Uncleanneſs, than ſhe was before her Marriage, the relation is in Chriſt, the influences are from Chriſt. The Perſons under the Covenant of Grace, *Antinomians* ſay, they are not ſo bound to the Command as others; but they miſtake it quite, if any Perſon be bound in the World to the Command, it's they that are not bound by the Law only, but by Love; the caſe as it was with *Moſes* Mother, *Pharaoh's* Daughter calls her when ſhe found *Moſes* among the Flags, and commanded her to Nurſe the child; the beſt Motive that moved her to Nurſe the child was Love, ſhe ſtood by to ſee the Child among the Flags, and when ſhe took up the Child, Love influences her as much as the Law; So when there is a Covenant relation to Chriſt, the Perſon in Covenant has an eye to him, not onlie from the Command, but from Love; So that no wonder it be called a Command, for it has all the Commands of the Law; and ſome moe, and the Obligations to obey, are ſtricter than under the Covenant of Works.

Queſt. 2. But here is a great Queſtion, ye ſay the Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of Works; we love to hear Grace exalted, and called a Teſtament, and a Promiſe, but that it ſhould be called a Command, looks this like a Covenant of Grace?

Anſw. It's true, it's called a Command, and it binds to all the Duties that the Covenant of Works binds to, and a great many moe, it binds to believing in Chriſt, to Repentance, which the Covenant of Works had no dream of; but it takes nothing away from the freedom of it, therefore hearken to two or three remarkable things about the command, and it will ſhew you, that though it be a Command, the Command takes nothing away of the form of it. 1. Take notice, that though it have ſo many Commands, as many as in the Covenant of Works, and moe, yet it will not ſtand on perfect obedience to them, ſincere Obedience it's one of the Clauſes of it, and O! but it's a ſweet word, He will accept of the Will in ſtead of the Deed: Never one Treated with a Servant, to give him a Fee, if he were willing to go to his Plough, and go his Errands, and if he did not go, he Indentured not to accept of the will for the Deed; but as a Father with a child, ſo he pities them that fear him, it's a Command indeed, but he accepts of the ſinceritie of the Will; it's a remarkable way of dealing in this Covenant, that he had with *David*, he was ſitting in his Houſe, and grieved to ſee the Ark of GOD in the fields, *What am I*, ſays he, *that I ſhould dwell in a Houſe of Cedar, and the Ark of GOD in Curtains?* *Nathan* was ſent to him, and told him, *becauſe it was in thy heart to build me a Houſe, I will build thee a ſure Houſe.* So there are Commands in this Covenant, that goes under the name of a Command, but the Commands will be accepted in the point of Obedience, the Will will be accepted for the Deed. 2. It contributes to evidence the Freedom of it, in the point of a Command, in that there is nothing commanded, but it's promiſed; it was not ſo in the Covenant of Works, they had habitual Grace, the Grace that *Adam* was created with, he was to have no other Stock but that; *Make to your ſelves a new heart, and renew a right Spirit within you*: If any will take that Command, and not look to the Promiſe, they might

might ſay, I may ly down and die, there is no hope of Heaven for me, I can no more make a new heart, than I can make a new Heaven, or a new Earth; but *a new heart will I alſo give thee, and I will renew a right Spirit within thee*: There is no Command, but there is a Promiſe ſuitable to it; that was not according to the Covenant of Works; there was no Promiſe of a new heart, or aſſiſting in Prayer, in the Covenant of Works, though there be as many Commands in the Covenant of Grace, as in the Covenant of Works, and many moe, yet ſince we bake beſide Meal we need not be diſcouraged. 3. Not only will he give to *will*, and Strength to *will*, but which is a great mercie, it admits of *Repentance*, when we have done an ill turn to our ſelves; if we had weeped as many Tears as there are Waters in the Sea, *If we ſhould give the fruit of our body for the ſin of our ſoul*, if we had offered our Children to GOD, for what we had done, it was all to no purpoſe, *In the day thou eats, thou ſhalt die*; but though this Covenant be Commands, and yet though they be broke, if we go and mourn over them, the Covenant admits of Repentance. And *laſtly*, which takes away the gall of being a Command, it admits of a Cautioner, and the Covenant is ſo ordered, that if we can go and mourn, and lay the weight on Jeſus, it's all one as if we had not broken it at all; ſo that it is a Command, of all that the Covenant of Works commands, and of many moe; for there are many things commanded in the Covenant of Grace, that were not commanded in the Covenant of Works; and yet the calling of the Covenant a Command, takes not away the Grace and Freedom of it. So ye have heard of the Covenant of Grace, and of the three Names given to it, that are handled this day, it's a *Teſtament*, a *Promiſe*, a *Command*; but the Name I eſpecially deſigned to handle is, the calling of it a *Covenant*.

Uſe, I will not fall on the Covenant now, only I exhort you to three things, which I reſolve to preſs in the cloſe of this Sermon.

1. From all the work of the day, learn the difference betwixt the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works; if ye be out of the ſtate of Nature, and can prove your effectual calling, and that GOD has wrought a work

a work of Converſion within you, I know no temptation, nor diſcouragment, that needs to afflict you with the fear of Hell; make but ſure under what Covenant ye are, and that God has indeed brought you to be born again, and ſtated you under a Covenant of Grace, the Glory ye look for, how ſimple, how low, how guiltie ſoever ye be, it's left to you as a Legacie in Chriſt's Teſtament, and the Father will not control the Will of the Dead: If thou can come to be ſtated under a right Covenant, thou needs not fear to plead as a Debt of Juſtice, Lord, give me thy Peace, and thy Pardon; If thou ſhould ſay, I am ſimple, poor, and ignorant, but will theſe make exception againſt the things left in Teſtament by Chriſt? The Mediator has left them in the Teſtament, and if thou know once the things left thee in Teſtament, nothing can obſtruct thy Peace, however there may be a Fatherly anger, there is nothing that can obſtruct fundamentally, and radically thy Peace about thy great Intereſt; for they are thine by vertue of a Teſtament, and the Father cannot but fulfill the Will of the Dead. Learn then to know what Covenant ye are under, for if ye be in Nature, all your grief for ſin, all your Repentance for ſin, all your pleading to Chriſt, is all in vain, your Covenant admits neither of Repentance, nor of a Cautioner, great is the danger of men that are not effectually called on this account.

2. I would have you look on this Covenant as a Promiſe, when ye get any thing of it, either accompliſhed, or a word let in to you of it, remember how ye held it, *Iſaiah* has many a ſweet promiſe, *Jeremiah* has many a ſweet promiſe, *Ezekiel*, *Moſes*, and all the reſt of the Prophets, have many a ſweet promiſe, and how come they to be ſet down there? They were not beſought by us, we did not ſo much as ſeek them to be ſet down, far leſs were they purchaſed by us, they came only by promiſe, and take in what is requiſite to a Promiſe, theſe things are the fruit of his condeſcendency, of his liberaltie, and they bring an Obligation on him to accompliſh them.

3. And I cloſe with it, from the work of this day ye may ſee that the Covenant is a Command, *they have broken my Covenant*, that is, they have broken my Command: there are many practical *Antinomians* among us, they run away

away to the Promiſes, and forget that the Covenant is a Command; no, its a Truth, that I am not afraid to Preach, there is nothing that the Covenant of Works requires, but its required in the Covenant of Grace, and a great deal more; there were many things never called for in the Covenant of Works, that are called for in the Covenant of Grace; and yet the Believer needs not be diſcouraged, they are all promiſed, the Will will be accepted for the Deed; but if thou ſit down carelesly, and caſt off the Command, and pleads to the Covenant as a Promiſe, thou takes not up the Covenant aright; of all Perſons bound to keep the Covenant, its thou that art in Covenant with him, like *Moſes* Mother, that Nurſed the Child, not only out of Command, but out of Love; but of all the Rebels that ever ſinned againſt him, are theſe that ſin againſt this Command.

SERMON V.

2 Samuel 23. *Verſe* 5.

Although my Houſe be not ſo with GOD; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Entred the laſt day to ſpeak of the Covenant of Grace, and the firſt thing I propoſed concerning it was, to conſider the Names it gets in the Bible; I have ſpoken of it as a *Teſtament*, and I have exhorted you to labour to try, if your Names were in the Teſtament; its called a *Promiſe*, and its likewiſe called a *Command*; of all which ye heard the laſt day, but the proper Name of it, its called a *Covenant*, it's true, *Antinomians*, they deny that properly its a Covenant, for they ſay, its free and without conditions; but in effect this Covenant of Grace, whatever Grace appears in it, its properly a Covenant.

There are three Things that properly make up a Covenant, and all the Three concur in this Covenant; *Firſt*, There are Parties Indenturing, and Treating, and concluding together. 2. There are Articles and Terms

on which the Agreement is made. 3. There is the interposing of Obligations for ratifying the Articles, for the Covenant carries a Curse in the bosom of it against the Breakers of the Covenant; and where these Three are, there is properly a Covenant, these Three I would make appear to you: for the Parties. I will not speak of them now, when I come to the second Branch of the *v. God hath made with me*, I will speak of the Parties; The things I will insist on to evince the Nature of this Covenant to you, is the Articles, and the Obligations that are interposed, for the ratifying of these Articles; the clearing of these two will contribute much to open the Nature of the Covenant; Therefore hearken and ponder them: As for the Articles, that ye may know what ye do, when ye Covenant with God, or pretend to be in Covenant with him, it were difficult to run through all the Articles treated in the Covenant.

That I may glance a little at them, I desire ye may take notice, that among Men there are four sorts ordinary of Covenants, and the truth is, the Covenant of Grace its not properly one of them, but it is something complex made up of them all: And they that would understand the Nature of the Gospel-covenant, must take in all the four. 1. Men use to make Covenants of Peace and War, Kingdoms and Nations they use to enter into such Leagues for Peace and War. 2. There are among Men Covenants of Traffick and Commerce, wherein either particular Nations or particular Merchants will Indenture and Bargain, and enter in Covenant for Traffick and Commerce. 3. There is among Men Covenants, such as pass betwixt Master and Servant, betwixt Princes and Subjects, which they call Despotick Covenants. *Lastly*, There are among Men Marriage-Covenants, wherein there passes a Treaty betixt a Man and a Woman. Now the Covenant of Grace, is not simply one of these four, but he that would rightly take up the Nature of it, must consider it as taking in all the four, and when we come under a Covenant with GOD, or have an interest in his Covenant, we are concerned in all the four.

First, There is betwixt GOD and us in the Covenant of Grace, a Covenant of Peace and War; its remarkable,

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the Scripture calls it a *Covenant of Peace*, Iſaiah 54. 10. The Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of Peace and War, and there are four things that ye will obſerve among Men, concur in a Covenant of Peace and War, and all the four concur in this Covenant.

Firſt, Ordinarly in a Covenant of Peace and War, there is Reconciliation betwixt the Parties that come under a Covenant of Peace and War, readily this is the firſt ſtep in a Covenant of Peace, Man had fallen in a ſtate of enmity with God, and ſo God was in a ſtate of enmity with man, God was bending his Bow, and preparing his Arrows to ſhoot, and fitting them on the ſtrings, and he is angry with the Wicked every day; Now when a Perſon comes under a Covenant with God, the firſt thing that is treated is, a Reconciliation, ſo that on Gods part, as *Iſa.* 1. 18. *Come now, and let us reaſon together ſaith the Lord, though your ſins be red as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow, though they be red as crimſon, they ſhall be as wool.* And the Sinner on the other hand triumphs in a Peace with God, *Rom.* 5. at the beginning, *being juſtified by Faith, we have peace with God*: So there is a Reconciliation made up by this Covenant, the firſt Step and Article of it is an Article of Peace 2. In Covenants of Peace and War, there is not only a Reconciliation, but there is a Fellowſhip, the Covenant of Peace reſolves in Fellowſhip; it is a rare thing for Men to treat a Covenant together, meerly to lay by Feud, and not to have future Friendſhip; the Covenant of Peace takes in the Reconciliation and Peace, and then adds a Friendſhip, ſo that now we may have acceſs to God with boldneſs, we may go tell him our caſe, we may beg Supplies out of his fulneſs; the great riſe of this is, the Covenant is a Covenant of Peace, it hath both taken away the Feud, and eſtabliſhed a Friendſhip. 3. In Covenants of Peace and War, there uſes to be an owning one anothers Intereſt, their Friends the ſame, and their Enemies the ſame; Now this is in the Covenant of Grace, and in this part of it, as its a Covenant of Peace, God Indentures, that our Friends ſhall be his Friends, and our Enemies ſhall be his Enemies, and his Enemies ſhall be our Enemies; Therefore he appears to *Paul* like one bound in a Covenant of Peace with the Saints at *Damaſcus*, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me*? on the other hand, we come

come to be concerned in his Intereſts, his Truth, his People and all the concernments; *Do not I hate them that hate thee*, ſays *David*? *yea, I hate them with a perfect hatred*: The Covenant bound him to it, for its a Covenant of Peace and War. *Laſtly*, As there uſes to be a Reconciliation, and an eſtabliſhment of Friendſhip, and having common Friends and common Enemies, ſo in theſe Covenants, Princes and others they bind to mutual help; they bind to help one anothers Intereſts in diſtreſs; ſo doth God in the Covenant of Grace, the Lord engages to be our Strength, our Saviour, our Buckler, our Shield, he engages to be a preſent help in time of need; and on the other hand, we engage according to our power, to help him, to come out and help the Lord againſt the mighty, and to help his People and all his Intereſts; this is neceſſary in a Covenant of Peace, and its neceſſary to be noticed by Believers on a threefold Account:

1. Many a time they are ready to be ſhaken exceedingly, in the point of their Peace with God, for why, they find ſuch an ill heart, ſuch dulneſs in Prayer, they find readily ſuch failings in Converſation, ſo that they conclude preſently, my Peace is broken off, no, the firſt Notion under which thou took up the Covenant is a Covenant of Peace, and ſo long as it ſtands, thy Peace ſtands; So when there comes to be a breach of Peace, we are ſtill to look into the Covenant, the Nature and Tenor of it, and to draw out an Extract of the Articles and Terms on which thy Peace comes to be made up; when he made the Reconciliation, and drew the Articles of the Covenant, he drew it not on theſe Terms, ay when ye ſin and provoke me, this Covenant ſhall be altered, no, it ſtood on ſurer Principles in the Covenant; therefore when thou thinks thy Peace altered, if thou be in Covenant, the Covenant on which thy Peace ſtands muſt be altered. 2. Its neceſſar to be obſerving the Obligation that lies on Chriſts people, to be Chriſts Friends, and Enemies to his Enemies; its a Covenanted Obligation in this, that when any of his People are low, ye may think it Charity to help them, but if thou help them not, thou breaks the Covenant, for the Covenant is a Covenant of Peace and War, ſo that in effect, when any of his Friends or Servants are in diſtreſs, if thou can help

them and does it not, thou art in danger of the curse of the Covenant; Therefore take it up ye that would understand the Nature of it, and would know what ye do, when ye say, I go and make a personal Covenant with God, and renew a personal Covenant with him, understand what ye do, when ye speak of it, its a Covenant of Peace and War, and wherein ye are to have common Friends and common Enemies, and to give help to his People and Friends, its a Covenant of Reconciliation, of Peace with himself, so when any of his Friends stand in need of your help, its not only an Act of Charity, or Compassion, but the neglect of it is a breach of the Covenant, ye are bound to it by the Covenant; therefore if ye would understand the Nature of the Covenant, its in the first place a Covenant of Peace and War, of Reconciliation, of Friendship, and for the future, of having common Friends and common Enemies, and give help to his Friends on the account of the Covenant.

Secondly, Among Men, Covenants are Covenants of *Traffick* and Commerce together: I believe in these four, I will give you a glance of the Tenor of the whole Covenant? Its ordinar for Nations, because every Nation cannot supply it self fully, but it stands in need of the Commodities of other Nations, therefore Princes will enter into a Covenant of Traffick, and exchange Commodities with others, for exporting for importing them; Now the Covenant of Grace is a Covenant of Traffick and Commerce with Heaven, and therefore ye have sometimes a Believer called a Merchant. *The wise Merchant goes and sells all that he hath, and buyes the Field where the Pearl is*; And ye have Christ himself holden out in the Scripture, under the formality of a Merchant, *Come buy Wine, and Milk and Honey, without Money, and without Price.*

For clearing this formality of the Covenant, as its a Covenant of *Traffick*, I would have you to notice three or four Things. 1. That Man as he violats the Covenant of Works, he came under enmity against God, and the Covenant of Peace was broken up, so that by their Fall all Traffick with Heaven was broken up, to this day the natural Man has no kind of Merchandising or Trafficking with Jesus, readily he may come to Ordinances, and to the Market of the Gospel, but he has no

Traffick

Traffick with Christ, his Covenant admits of none, there is neither buying nor selling betwixt Christ and him; but the opening of this everlasting covenant, and getting an Interest in it, opens a Traffick betwixt Christ and Believers, and ye will find in the Covenant these three or four things relating to this Traffick.

First, Ye will find the Goods we Traffick for holden out in the Covenant, and they are of many kinds, there is *wine, milk, honey, spices, gold, oil, fine linen, eye-salve*, in effect there are Fields, and Fields wherein the Pearls are, the Covenant offers, and opens a Traffick, a Commerce, a Trade betwixt Christ and Believers, and the things are *Wine, Milk, Honey*, &c. 2. Ye have the Covenant, not only opening the things for which the Traffick is about, but ye have the Price of them in the Covenant, ye have a Treaty about the Price of the Commodities, Isaiah 55. *Ye that have no money, come and buy without money, and without price*; This seems to be a Contradiction, to buy without Money, and without Price; How can that be? the truth is, our Buying is a kind of Giving on the Merchants part, I confess its a considerable Objection, that some move, How can it be said, that these Commodities are sold without Money, doth not the wise Merchant sell all, and goes and buys the Field where the Pearl is; can he be said to buy without Money, and without Price, that sells all and gives for the Field? But the truth is, our All is not Money, *but dross and dung, and when we have done all, we are but unprofitable Servants*; and when we have sold all, and bought the Field, we have neither given Money nor Gold for it. 3. There is in this Traffick on this formality, under which the Covenant is taken up, there is this Clause I say, in the Articles of Traffick, that the whole Stock, on which we Trade, is Christs, and we come to Traffick with another mans Goods; Its remarkable, there are some he sends out, and gives them but one Talent to Traffick with, others he sends out and gives them two, to another he gives three, to another he gives four; but whether they be one, two, three or four Talents they are all his, all the things on which the Believer Trafficks, according to the Terms of the Gospel Covenant, they are all his, the Glory and Grace of it; no wonder they should especially redound to him; so that when we

have done any thing, or when we have gone and Trafficked at a Communion, and Traded in Prayer; or when we have gone to a Sacrament, or a Promiſe, whatever the Traffick be, its always Chriſts Stock on which we Trade. The Talents are his, and not ours, the parts, the gifts, the graces, the liberty in Prayer, the enlargement of Heart in performing Duties, they were all Chriſts, the Talents were his, and we were only Traffickers with another mans Goods: ſo when we have moſt liberty, and make the beſt Market we can, the gain and glory ſhould eſpecially and principally redound to him. 4. In a Covenant of Commerce and Traffick, there uſes to be gain deſigned, and if it be not attained, the Merchant thinks all that he hath done loſt labour, this is indeed in the covenant of Grace, as it's a covenant of Traffick, the perſon that has skill to follow the Trade, is deſigning gain; it's true there are many bunglers & hypocrites, that has no skill to follow the Trade, but he that has skill to Trade, his two Talents become four, and his five comes to be ten, it's neceſſary for them that are under this covenant of Traffick, to be every year obſerving how their Stock grows, whether it be increaſing, or going backward, whether thou be more heavenly, more Spiritual, more Tender, or whether thou haſt more communion with God; for the covenant is a covenant of Merchandiſe: for if we be ſtanding ſtill, we are going back, if we be at a ſtand with it, and has no more this year than the laſt year, thou has the ſame meaſure of Duties, the ſame meaſure of Grace, the ſame meaſure of Knowledge and of Words, thou has no skill of the Trade, if thou be not thriving and gaining at it; ſo ye ſee it's firſt a covenant of Peace and War, next its a covenant of Traffick, labour to make uſe of the covenant, not only for Peace, but for Friendſhip with him; in the contrivement and drawing of the covenant, he deſigned a Traffick and Trade betwixt him and thee and deſigns gain in it, examine therefore how it thrives with you.

Thirdly, This Covenant, as its a Covenant that uſes to paſs betwixt Princes and Subjects, betwixt Maſters and Servants, its called a *Deſpotick* Covenant, under this formality it's neceſſar to be taken up alſo, as a Covenant betwixt Superiour and Inferiour; now that its ſuch a Cove-

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nant, its evident, in regard frequently its called a Command, as *Pſal.* 111. 9. *He has commanded his covenant for ever.* That ye may take it up under this formality, I would have you notice three or four things, that occurs in this Covenant, all of which ye will find meeting in the Covenant of Grace. 1. Ordinarily, the Maſter and the Superiour Indentures with the Servant for ſeveral things, the Servant according to the nature of his ſtation is to perform his part of his Service; everie one that comes under a Covenant, are not called to the ſame ſervice, the Maſter will have one to wait on his own Perſon, another to hold the plough, and a third to call the plough, yet all come under a *Deſpotick* Covenant with the Maſter; thus it is in the Covenant of Grace, the great Lord and Mediator has Treated the Covenant ſo, as every Chriſtian that enters in Covenant, though he be not bound to all the Work of other Servants, yet he becomes particularly bound to all the work of the Station, & of the calling, to which by the Covenant he is called; readily he is not bound to the work of an Officer, but to the work of a more private ſtation; but all the Duties of his ſtation, the Covenant binds him to them; whatever be the ſtation thou art in, whether thou be a Merchant, or a Maſter, or a Servant, or a Friend, whatever be the ſtation or relation, God in the Covenant has bound thee to all the Duties of that ſtation, both in reference to thy Maſter, and all thy Fellow-ſervants; ſo that when we wrong our Neighbour, let it be in his Name, or in his Poſſeſſion, we fall under a breach of one Article of the Covenant, ſo though the Covenant bind firſt and principally the Maſter to the Servant, coming under the *Deſpotick* Covenant, and the Servant he is eſpecially bound to the Maſter, yet when he is under that *Deſpotick* Covenant, the Maſter will not allow the Servant to ſtrike his Fellow-ſervants, but he is bound in his carriage to be at peace with others; ſo in this *Deſpotick* Covenant, it binds firſt, *To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our ſoul,* and alſo *to love our neighbour as our ſelves*; ſo the injuries done to our Neighbour, are a breach of the Covenant with God. 2. In a *Deſpotick* Covenant, we have not only ſervice Required, but it's ordinary for Maſters to tell the Servants the manner of the ſervice, he will have them

to do it humbly and obediently, and readily; now in the Covenant of Grace, as the Father has enjoyned all the Duties of the Station of the Servant, he takes in Covenant, and so he hath told the manner how it must be performed, he tells it must be performed sincerely, and in faith, and with an eye to Christ, and from a principle of Love to God, and to the Glory of his Master; or else he tells us in the Covenant, he will regard it no more, *than the cutting off a dogs neck*, or as if he had killed a man; so when we do the duties of our station, if we do them not with the qualifications required in the Covenant, we break the Covenant. O how many breaches are we guilty of, when we are so little at our Duty; when we engage in the Service, we engage to do it sincerely & spiritually, that its not done in Love, Faith, and in the right Gospel Motive, we break the Covenant, no wonder many Believers go with their hand on their Loins, for breach of his Laws, when both the Duties of the station are neglected, or if they be done, they are not done according to the qualifications required. 3. In doing this Service there is a Reward promised on the Masters part to the Servant, the Lord of that Servant when he cometh, verily I say unto you, the Master shal make him Lord over all that he hath; nay more, the Lord of that Servant shal gird himself, and stand and serve him; so that in effect in this Covenant, the Covenant binds to the Duties of the station, and that they should be done in such and such a manner; so there is a great Reward promised to them that do them. *Lastly*, Sometimes liberal Masters in making Covenants with Servants, will give them some Arles, something in hand; so we read in Scripture of the Earnest of the Spirit, that is, in our beginnings, the Arles of the Spirit, the beginning of Love, of Life, of Liberty, of Peace with God, of Delight in God, they are like a Master, that he may encourage the Servant to do the Work he hath Commanded him; not only he promises to give them a Reward, but to give them all that he hath, and will give them an Earnest of that; It's remarkable, Princes that intend to be Liberal in their Offers, which they make, as *Herod* did to *Herodias*, they have said, *Ask of me, and I will give it thee, to the half of my kingdom*; never one offered to give them all that he had, and to make them Ruler over all

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that he had; ſo ye ſee the Tenor of the Covenant, under all theſe three Formalities, but all theſe three hold not out the nature of it ſo fully, as the fourth, its a Marriage Covenant, its a Covenant Tranſacted, not only betwixt Princes and Subjects, betwixt two Nations Traſficking together, &c. but it is a Marriage Covenant, and that beſt expreſſes the nature of it.

SERMON VI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

AMong many Differences betwixt the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, this is one; there is no Promiſe in the Covenant of Works, but there are four Commands for it, but there is no Command in the Covenant of Grace, but it hath two Promiſes, there is a Promiſe of ſtrength to obey, and a promiſe of Reward when it is obeyed; Therefore no wonder it be called a Covenant of Promiſes. I told you that there were four ſorts of Covenants among men, and the Covenant of Grace was a Complex of all the four, it has ſomething of the nature of a Covenant of *Peace* & *War*, it has ſomething of the nature of a Covenant of *Traffick* & *Commerce*, its a *Deſpotick* Covenant, ſuch as betwixt Maſter and Servants, and Prince and Subjects; but the truth is, all theſe three do not fully expreſs the nature of it; therefore the fourth which remains a little to be ſpoken to, will open it more fully, its a *Marriage Covenant*, therefore ye find very frequently in Scripture, mention of Eſpouſals, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. *I have eſpouſed you*, ſaith *Paul*, *as a chaſt virgin to one husband, even to Jeſus Chriſt*, I *will remember the kindneſs of thy youth, even of thy eſpouſals*; herein it differs from the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Works was *fœdus amicitiæ*, God and *Adam* were friends; but this is *fœdus conjugale*, a Marriage Covenant.

That I may the better open this formality of the Covenant, as a Marriage-covenant, I will offer theſe two things

things to be conſidered. 1. I will ſhew you, that this Covenant eſtabliſheth a Marriage betwixt Chriſt and Believers, its in effect the contract, and contains all the Articles of the Marriage. 2. I will ſhew you on what grounds it comes to paſs, that this excellent Covenant eſtabliſheth this Marriage.

Firſt, That this Covenant drives at a Marriage, its not a Covenant of Peace and War only, or a Covenant of Traffique, ſuch as betwixt Kings and Subjects, but its a Marriage covenant; The clearing of this will appear, if ye notice two things that uſe to conſtitute a Marriage, and the Covenant eſtabliſhes them both with Chriſt. 1. There is an Union, a Marriage Union. 2. There is a Communion that flows from that Marriage Union, theſe are the two things that eſſentially conſtitute a Marriage, and by the Covenant both the two come to be eſtabliſhed, betwixt Chriſt and Believers.

Firſt, There is an Union, I mean not an Union of Friendſhip, or that is founded in the relation betwixt King and Subject, or Maſter and Servant, but its a Marriage Union; there are two properties accompanying a Marriage Union; *Firſt*, Its the neareſt Union. *Secondly*, Its the ſtrongeſt Union. 1. The Union betwixt Chriſt and Believers, is the neareſt Union, its remarkable, it's compared in Scripture to the Union betwixt the Root and the Branches, the Head and the Body, the Husband and the Wife, they are ſo Unite, that of all Unions its the neareſt; Chriſt ſpeaking of theſe that were unite to him, hath a ſtrange word, *Mark* 3 and laſt *verſes*, *For who ever ſhall do the will of my Father, the ſame is my brother, and ſiſter, and mother*. How can theſe conſiſt together, to be his brother, his ſiſter, and mother? But the meaning is, they have the neareſt tyes to him, the neareſt Union, he is as near to me, as if he were my Brother, my Siſter, and Mother. 2. As its the neareſt Union, ſo its the ſtrongeſt; the Marriage Union is of all Unions the ſtrongeſt; but this Union with Jeſus Chriſt, eſtabliſhed by the covenant, it has ſomething ſtronger than the ordinary Marriage Union: For 1. An ordinary Marriage Union may be looſed by Adultery; Its not ſo in this covenant, *Thou haſt played the harlot with manie lovers, yet return to me, backſliding children, for I am married unto you*. 2. An ordinary

Marriage,

Marriage Union may be diſſolved by death, Rom. 7. 2. *The woman which hath an husband, is bound by the Law to her Husband, as long as he liveth, but if her husband be dead, ſhe is looſed from the Law of her husband*; But neither Adultery, nor Death, can looſe this Marriage Union; ſo the Covenant eſtabliſhes an Union with Jeſus, not meerly of Friendſhip, Traffick and Commerce; but it eſtabliſhes a Conjugal and Marriage Union.

2. This Covenant as it eſtabliſhes a Marriage Union, ſo it eſtabliſhes a Marriage Fellowſhip; the Fellowſhip and Communion grounded on this Union, makes it a Marriage Fellowſhip: Take a view of three or four things holden out in the Covenant, in reference to the Fellowſhip, and ye will find, as there is the neareſt Union, and the ſtrongeſt, and ſo a Marriage Union, ſo there is a Marriage Fellowſhip. 1. Take a view of the converſe that paſſes betwixt Chriſt and Believers, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. *Ye are the temple of the living God*, as God had ſaid, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*, Rev. 3. 20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and ſup with him, and he with me*; Lay theſe expreſſions together, *I will be their God, I will dwell in them, I will walk with them, and ſup with them*; They look very like a Marriage converſe. 2. Not only doeth that converſe prove this Marriage Fellowſhip, but the Covenant holds out betwixt Chriſt and Believers, a mutual communication of Secrets: not only will he *walk in them, dwell in them, ſup with them*, but he tells them all his Secrets, *Joh.* 15. 15. *Henceforth I call you not ſervants, for the ſervant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made them known to you.* On the other hand, they put on him all their ſecrets, *All my complaints is before him, and my groaning is not hid from him*, ſaid *David*; It is remarkable, there are many things we groan for that we dare hardly tell any body what is at the root of it; *All my complaints is before thee.* It was a notable word *Hannah* had to *Eli*, when ſhe was mourning in the Temple, and he ſuppoſed her to be drunk, *Put away from thee thy wine*, ſays he; *My lord*, ſaith ſhe, *I am not drunk with wine, but am a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit, and I have poured out my com-*

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plaint before the Lord. It's a Metaphor taken from a Bottle, that a man is pouring out, until it be all poured out from the Bottom; and this is like a Marriage Fellowſhip indeed. He is their God, and they are his, he walks in them, and dwells in them, and ſups with them, and he tells them all that he has heard of his Father, and they pour out their complaints, and their very groaning is not hid from him.

But 3. If ye take notice how the Covenant holds out, their ſtanding and falling together like married perſons, as the Woman marries the Man for good and ill, the alteration of the Husbands lot, from being ſtrong to be ſickly, from being rich, to become poor, from being honourable, to become deſpiſed, it looſes not the Marriage Union, the Union is ſtill bound. The fellowſhip betwixt Chriſt and Believers, is of this nature, it is like the Marriage of married perſons, that if ever they be tender it is when they are married, then their affections boyls moſt; it is ſo with Chriſt, like a kindly Husband, he is moſt tender of his married Wife; It is remarkable, when *Stephen* was ſtoned, he looked up, and ſaw Jeſus ſtanding at the Fathers right hand, the Father ſaid to him, *Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footſtool.* And *Heb.* 1. 6. *And when he bringeth in the firſt begotten into the world, he ſaith, let all the Angels worſhip him:* but when any of them that he has married is ſuffering, he lets them ſee Jeſus ſtanding at his right hand, and all the Angels of God ſtand and worſhip him.

Laſtly, If ye take a view of the delight they have of one another, O the pleaſure he has of converſe with his people! *Prov.* 8. 20. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight.* On the other hand, what delight have they in him, when they ſit down under the ſhadow of the Apple-tree, and goes with him into the Garden, and into the Banqueting-houſe, and finds his fruit ſweet to their taſte: So lay all theſe together, and ye will ſee the Covenant, as it holds out a Treaty of Peace and War, as it opens a Traffick, as it is a Tranſaction betwixt Lord and Servant, ſo betwixt Husband and Wife; ſo it is a Marriage-Covenant, and it eſtabliſhes an Union and Communion.

Queſt. Before I leave this, there is one queſtion to be cleared

cleared; one may ask, How is it possible, that there should be a Marriage Union betwixt Christ and his Followers in this Covenant, there may be a Treaty of Peace and War, there may be a Traffick betwixt Kings and Subjects, there may be a Covenant, as betwixt Lord and Master, but how can there be a Covenant, as betwixt Husband and Wife? The great reason of this difficulty is, the inequality betwixt the Parties, He is the Potter, and we are the clay, and the Potter to marry the clay, there is not only a physical difference, but a moral. He is infinitely holy, and we are exceedingly sinful, and how then can it be a Marriage Covenant.

Answ. For clearing of this, I desire ye may take notice of three or four things; 1. Our blood is honoured and made noble, by the assuming of our nature into a personal Union with the God-head, this has in effect preferred our Nature to the Nature of Angels, Man is now exalted above the Angels, and they think it no disgrace to them, they were our elder Brethren by creation, & they were more noble creatures, and we were made a little lower than the Angels, but now they think it no disgrace to worship One that is Man, and to follow him where ever he goes: How low soever we be by creation, yet our blood is Nobilitate, in that it's unite to the Person of the God-head, in the Person of the Mediator. 2. Take notice of this, That Christ has a way of purifying these that he Marries, the case is as it was with *Ahasuerus* and *Esther*, she is pitched on to marry *Ahasuerus*, but there must be thirty days, wherein her maids were to perfume her, before she was married, this was Typical, and shews, that though there be an inequality betwixt Parties, yet Christ has a way of purifying, and making them that have an ill smell'd breath, to give a sweet smell. He has perfumes that can make them sweet and odoriferous. 3. Though there be a great inequality betwixt the parties, yet the Covenant may drive this Marriage, in regard, how low soever we be by creation, we are the Fathers Gift in Election to the Son, the Father gave Believers to the Son in Election, *All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me.* Now, how inconsiderable soever we be by creation, and how despicable a Gift, yet he respects the Gift for the Givers sake. *Lastly*, Christ

is exceeding condeſcending, for as great, and as noble, and as eminent as Chriſt is, yet he is of all the moſt condeſcending, he took well with that, not to *have a hole to lay his head in*, and to be *crucified betwixt two thieves*; and no wonder he take well with it, to marry a black Bride, eſpecially ſince ſhe was the Fathers Gift, and he knows how to perfume her, and Nobilitat her Blood, by uniting it to the God-head; So that ye ſee the Marriage is very forcible, on all theſe four accounts; Now if ye would rightly take up this Covenant of Grace, and unſtand what ye are doing, when ye make a Covenant with Chriſt, ye muſt take up the Covenant in all theſe four reſpects; it is a Covenant of Peace and War, that Chriſt and ye ſhall have common Friends, and common Enemies, it is a Covenant of Traffique, where ye may buy and ſell, ye may buy fine Linen, Gold, Eye-ſalve, without money, and without price; it is a Covenant betwixt Lord and Maſter, and Subjects and Servants, that ye ſhall ſerve him, and in the manner preſcribed in the Covenant, and he ſhall give the greateſt Reward at the Term, and an Arles until is come; and withall, it is a Marriage Covenant; take you to the Covenant under all theſe Formalities, and ye will take it up right.

And that ye may be put to it, to take up the Covenant as a Marriage Covenant; I will but give you theſe three Qualifications, that are neceſſary in ones carrying a Marriage Covenant.

Firſt, I exhort you to hearken to Chriſts wooing motions, all the Sermons and Scriptures that are the grounds of this Marriage, they are indeed Chriſts wooing motions, he would not only be at peace with them and have a Traffick with them, but he would have a Marriage; Its true, there are many of you, ye may ſay, as *Abigail* ſaid, ſhe was married to *Nabal*, and *David* ſent to take her to him to wife, I am not worthy to waſh the Feet of the ſervants of my Lord, yet ſhe aroſe and went to meet the Meſſengers to go with them; indeed we are not worthy to go to his Marriage-bed, and to be priviledged with the priviledges of the Covenant, yet entertain his wooing motions

Secondly, I would deſire you to conſider, what the priviledge of ſuch a Marriage is, O ſuch a joynture as he prepares

prepares, though he get no Tocher, as a wonderful joynture he gives; It is remarkable, *Ahasuerus* had married *Esther*, a poor maid, *Mordecai*'s Niece, yet he loves her, so that he says to her at the Feast of the Banquet of Wine, What is thy Petition Queen *Esther* and it shall be granted to thee, even to the half of my Kingdom: But these are not the Terms that he makes to his Bride: they are strange offers in the Covenant; *concerning my Sons, and my Daughters, command ye me; Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name, he shall give it thee; Delight thy self in the Lord, and he shall give thee according to the desire of thy soul.*

Thirdly, That ye may enter this Marriage Covenant, remember the Terms on which ye must enter, as a Woman in Marriage does when she marries a Husband, she marries him for good and ill, readily ye may see your Husbands interests very low, but let not that dissolve the Marriage; as guiltiness will not dissolve the Marriage on his part, so the Cross attending him should not loose it on our part. Now they that would understand the Covenant rightly, and know what they are doing, when they are personally covenanting with him, they do all the four, they accept of him as a Friend, to be at peace with him, and to have common Friends, & common Enemies; and they accept of a Covenant of Traffick, that they will *buy gold and fine linen*; and they accept him as a Lord; but especially they take him for a Husband, the Covenant is a Marriage Covenant. These four will sum up the great Heads of the Covenant. But to go further.

The third thing I would open is, how this Covenant is made up on all these four Heads; I will not here speak of the Mediators part, I pitched on that else, and shewed you what the Mediator did, in reference to the Covenant. But for the making up of these four sorts of Covenants, there are two things necessary to make it up. 1. There must be a consent to all the Articles by both Parties. And 2. There must be Obligations to secure the consent for the future, otherways variable creatures like us, if there were not a penalty: and a curse put into the Covenant, what would our consent signifie? Now both the two are necessar, in Transacting of all these four sorts of Covenants, in all the Heads and Articles of it. *First*, There must be consent of Parties, to make up

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the Covenant. *Secondly*, An Obligation from the hazard and curſe, in caſe that conſent be paſt from; and here I will ſpeak a little of the conſent, that is neceſſary to make up this Covenant, I need not ſpeak of the conſent on Gods part, I will evidence to you, the moſt hearty conſent that ever was given to a Contract on his part by theſe three things.

Firſt, He committed the drawing of the Covenant to the Mediator; It is true the Prophets were the Pen-men and Secretaries, but the Mediator was the Inſpirer of all the Articles, now it was an evidence of his hearty conſent, that he committed the drawing of the Covenant to the Mediator, and his Glory is a thouſand times more advanced by the Covenant of Grace, than it was by the Covenant of Works, all the payment he would have gotten from *Adam*, was nothing to the payment he hath gotten from his Son; if all the Angels, if all the Sons of *Adam* had met together to do him ſervice, they would not all make up ſuch a piece of ſervice, as he got from his Son, the Man that was his Fellow. 2. His conſent it is all along declared in the Scripture, why has he penned this Bible, & appointed his Miniſters to Preach & preſs it on the People, if he were not ſerious in his deſigns? Why makes he ſuch proteſtations, *As I live, I delight not in the death of ſinners.* Why weeps he when his offers are refuſed, as he did over Jeruſalem, if he had not given his conſent in the Covenant? 3. The Mediator that drew the Covenant, and ſealed it by a Teſtament with his Blood; of all the perſons that ever were received into Glory, he received him in the greateſt Triumph, when he welcomed his firſt-born Son to Glory, he ſet him down on his right hand, and bade *all the angels worſhip him*? If he had not done him the greateſt Service, would he have uſed him ſo? And would he had ſo great pleaſure to have them *ſinging, worthy, worthy is the Lamb*; But all the matter in making up the Covenant, is about our conſent to the Covenant, now a Chriſtian gives his conſent to the Covenant, and thereby in all the four Heads, makes it to be a ſure and faſt Bargain.

Firſt, We give our conſent to the Covenant in the ſecond *Adam*; as we gave an implicite conſent to the Covenant of Works in the firſt *Adam*, ſo we gave conſent to

the Covenant of Grace in the ſecond *Adam*: Here you would take notice, that though the Covenant of Grace be made with all Believers, and every particular Believer may make uſe of it, as if it were only intended for him; yet the principal Parties Treating the Covenant, are, the Father, and the Mediator, the covenant of Grace is eſpecially made with the Mediator; now when the Meſſiah giveth his conſent, and accepts of the Covenant, as a publick Perſon ſtanding in the room, and ſupplying the place of all the Elect, we gave our conſent in him, and the truth is, there is never a Chriſtian that comes to be backward to imbrace the Covenant, or that after they had imbraced the Covenant, breaks it, but in a manner they ſay, that Chriſt conſented to more than they will ſtand to; for as the Father in Baptiſm binds the Son to the Covenant, ſo the Mediator as a publick Perſon, ſtanding in the room of the Elect, the Father had given his conſent, and the Mediator had given his conſent to the Covenant in all our Names, and has engaged to get our conſent, as a Husband may conſent for the Wife, or the Parent may conſent for the child that is a Minor, ſo doth Chriſt as a publick Perſon conſent in our Name, and whoever break the Covenant, they as it were, flee away from our conſent of the Covenant, Tranſacted betwixt the Father and the Mediator.

Secondly, We give our conſent to all the Articles of the Covenant in our Baptiſm: A chriſtian before he can be engaged to other Lovers, the Lord keeps him as it were from the Womb, he will give him his Name, the Seal of the Covenant; its true the Parent binds for the children, as men may make Bonds binding their Heirs, ſo they have a warrand to bind for their children to God: There are two conſents we give, and both of them are implicite, our Parents binds us to be Chriſts Friends in Baptiſm, to *buy of him gold, fine linen*, and to accept of him for our Lord, to marry him, and to have the neareſt Union with him, and the ſweeteſt communion that may be enjoyed: But there is a two-ofold explicite conſent, that we give to the Covenant; *Firſt*, It's an expiicite conſent, when we accept of the external Priviledges of the Church, the Word and Sacraments; when we accept of theſe, and ſtate our ſelves Members of the Church, the very accepting of the Priviledges, is a conſent to all the Articles

of the Covenant; a perſon that is not reſolved to be ſerious in taking the Covenant in all theſe four Heads, had done better not to have accepted the Priviledges of the Church, the very accepting of the priviledge, to go to the Church, to get your children Baptized, to come to the Table of the Lord, is as much as to ſay, I will ſtand to what the Mediator Treated, and what my Parents did engage to, when I was Baptized. 2. We give this explicite conſent, either in the Sacrament of the Supper, or at any time a Chriſtian comes under a perſonal Vow, both of theſe are expreſs conſents, ſo that, though it may be, as ye will hear the conſent be not cordial; for there are many kinds of conſents to the covenant; though I ſay the conſent be not cordial, yet it is enough to bring thee under the curſe of the Covenant: though it bring thee not under the Bleſſings of the Covenant, thou has neither a covenant of Friendſhip, nor a covenant of Traffick; the Mediator gave his conſent, and thy Parents gave their conſent, and in thy accepting of the priviledges of the Church, and the Sacrament of the Supper, thou gave thine; & though they bring thee not to be married to the Mediator, yet they may bring under the curſe of the Covenant; for when it may be thou replyes, thou did not give thy conſent to the Covenant, but thy conſent was given, in accepting of the priviledges of the Church; or when thou came to the Sacrament of the Supper, or came under a perſonal Vow, and in this conſent, either we accept and cordially imbrace the Covenant, or by our conſent, we expoſe our ſelves to all the curſes of it; the very conſent engages us to all the curſes of it, therefore will he ſay unto thee, *Out of thy mouth I condemn thee*; So the Father is cordial in his conſent, and the Mediator can bear him witneſs of it; and all the viſible Church, they viſibly profeſs they ſtand to the Covenant, as he drew it, they approve of the conſent he gave, and that their Parents gave in Baptiſm, and by their accepting of the outward priviledges of the Church, and when they take the Sacrament of the Supper, they give their own conſent, and when they have given their own conſent, they are either under all the curſes of the Covenant, or all the Bleſſings of it.

Queſt. I will only clear one caſe of conſcience, that may be very obvious againſt this Doctrine, and ſo ſhall cloſe

close this Sermon; Some may say, I am afraid to give an express consent, or else I would go home from this Sermon, and go to a corner and tell him, I owne what the Mediator did, when he consented to the Covenant in my Name; I owne what my Parents did in Baptism, and I give my own Consent, and gives my hand, and as it were strikes hands with the Father; I will go and do all these things, but I am afraid to give my consent on a twofold account. 1. *I* am afraid that my consent be not sincere. And 2. I am afraid that it be not abiding. I confess this is a great Objection, for the Covenant cannot be really Treated, but by Consenters who are Upright, and who will Persevere.

For answer to the Question, I will offer you two or three things. 1. I would have you notice, that several times, the first Motive of the Souls consenting to Covenant with God, it's often fear, I confess indeed, fear is a changeable thing, and we may do with our fears, as the fame goes of the man, that when he was upon Sea, he vowed to the Virgin *Mary*, that if he came safely to Land, he would offer her a pound of Candle, but when he came to Shore, he said a plack candle might serve her; our resolution alters with our Fears, yet many times fear of hell, and desire of Heaven, drives on the beginning. Ye must not think the work will not be sincere, because the fear of hell may be at the bottom of thy consenting to the Covenant; No, like a woman that is marrying a man, the first motive of the marriage is, he is a great Man, and has a great Estate, and I will have an easie life with him, but yet afterward she comes to love him for himself, the beginning of the work, and thy giving thy hearts consent to owne the Mediator, in what he did, it may be fear of hell, and love of Heaven, and thou may love the man that is offered to be thy Husband, because thou wilt get great things with him, yet afterward thou will love him for himself, therefore stand not at it on this account, but come forward.

Secondly, Take notice, that sometimes there may be a very hearty consent, when yet it's but ill expresst, there may be much in the heart, and little in the expression; the truth is, the case is in our consenting to the Covenant, as with two Men, the one is an honest Man, and dow not endure cheating, but for his hand-writ, he can draw nothing but

his mark; The other man is a Clerk, and can draw excellent Letters, and gild them all with Gold, but he has a cheating hand, and a falſe heart: In thy conſent to the Covenant, though thou can but take up more of thy ill, & knows not what thy comfort is, yet there may be much love, thou art like the man that is writing only his mark, and the fear of hell, and love of Heaven makes thee give thy conſent; and when thou haſt given thy conſent, thou cannot write thy own name, but thy mark, yet come forward write thy mark.

Thirdly, I exhort thee that makes this doubt, to conſider, that the ſtrength to perſevere in the Covenant, when thou haſt conſented, it muſt come from the Covenant; the caſe is with us, as with ſome poor man that comes to a Writer, and bids him write the Bond of ſuch a Sum, and after it is writen, he bids him pay for the writing of it, and he ſaith, I have nothing to pay for it, until the Bond be payed to me; in the point of Perſeverance its ſo with us, we are not to go and torment our ſelves with, I will fall away, I will not perſevere, we are not bound to pay for the Bond, until that the Bond be payed to us; therefore it is the groundleſſeſt thing in the world to ſtand at, I will not give my conſent to the Covenant, for I will not be ſincere, I will not get bidden at it, but I will give my conſent, when the Bond is payed to me, and then I will pay for the writing of it, and I will get ſtrength to perform, & to perſevere; thou has no furniture, neither for being Cordial, nor for Perſeverance, until once the Bond be begun to be payed.

Laſtly, Chriſtian, know, thou that ſtands at conſenting on theſe Grounds, know this for certainty, that there has a great many entered in Covenant with Chriſt, and conſented to it, they have gone and made a perſonal Covenant, and holden up their hands, and vowed it in a Covenant with God, that were as weak at the beginning as thou, and by their hanging on the Promiſes of the Covenant, have been keeped conſtant; If in thy conſent to the Covenant, and endeavouring to keep it, if thou honeſtly endeavour to keep it, every breach of it will not make him caſt thee out of it: I confeſs ſome Covenants men will make, they have this clauſe in it, if the one fail, the other is looſe, the Maſter and Servant are free at the Term; its not ſo in the Covenant of Grace, the Covenant of Grace binds God to his

own Faithfulneſs, and his Son, *If we believe not, he abides faithful, he cannot deny himſelf*; the ſcope of this is, to put you, to own your Mediator's conſent, and your Parents conſent, and go home and ſtrike hands with him; and accept of the Covenant of Peace, and a Covenant of Traffick, that ye will be more in going to the Mercat where *Gold, Eye-ſalve, Fine Linen*, are to be ſold, *without money, and without price*, and ye will accept of him for a Lord; and readily when the Bond is beginning to be payed, ye will find enough for ſtedfaſtneſs and ſincerity. There is Gods part, and our part in the Covenant, and we will never do any thing at our part, until He begin to do at His part, all the Furniture on our part muſt come from Him; Therefore we can never be the firſt Paymaſter, and can never be the Party in Covenant, that will begin firſt to pay the Articles of the Covenant; No, in the day we Covenant with Him, we make this an expreſs Article in the Covenant, Lord, till thou fulfil thy Part, I can never fulfil my part.

SERMON. VII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure; and this is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Divided this Verſe in five Branches, the firſt Branch was the Nature of the Security, that *David* had from God for his encouragement, he calls it *a Covenant*; I have dwelt on this at length, though Divines that write of the Covenant, inſiſt on ſeveral things that I have not mentioned, yet I need dwell no longer in opening the Nature of the Covenant than I have done; There is no Man, nor Society of Men can looſe the Obligation of a Covenant; It always binds, either to the Duties, or to the Curſe and Penalty of the Covenant; and if we caſt off Obligation to the Duty, we ly under the Obligation to the Penalty.

But before I yet leave this Branch, there is one thing I

propoſed in the Point when I named it, that I will dwell on in the Work of this day, which is, to evidence and prove that this Covenant is a Covenant of Grace, for ſo I told you in the propoſing of the Point, that the great ground of encouragement at death is, *the Covenant of Grace*: I confeſs, I remember not where in all the Scripture its expreſly called by this Name; Its called *a Covenant of Peace*, and *a Covenant of Promiſes*, Epheſ. 2. 12. And its called *a Covenant conſiſting of Mercies*, Iſa. 55. *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, even the ſure mercies of David*: The root and end of it is ſaid to be Grace, *to the praiſe and glory of his Grace*, and to the *exalting of his Grace*. There are multitudes of Names given it in the Bible, equivalent to this Name *a Covenant of Grace*; Therefore it may very rationally have this Name *a Covenant of Grace*. But the thing I intend to follow in the Work of this day is, to do theſe four things, and if the Lord be with us, and bleſs us, they may be for our edification and advantage. 1. I will prove and make appear to you, that this everlaſting Covenant, this ordered and ſure Covenant, is a Covenant abſolutely of Grace. 2. I will ſhew you ſome reaſons, why God in tranſacting this Covenant, would have it to be intirely a Covenant of Grace. 3. I ſhall clear an Objection or two. And laſtly, ſhall help you to improve it, in reference to ſome particular Caſes.

Firſt, For proving that its a Covenant abſolutely of Grace, I muſt firſt clear what is meaned by the word *Grace*. Its true, ſometimes its put for inherent Grace, which Papiſts call *Gratia gratum faciens*. 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt*: Moſt ordinarly its put for Gods *free favour and good will*, ſo we find *Rom.* 11. *If it be of Grace, then it is no more of works, otherwiſe grace would not be grace*. And when we call it a Covenant of Grace, the meaning is, its a Covenant conſiſting of meer Favour and Good-will; and this is the thing I am to make out this day, that this Covenant is abſolutely and intirely a Covenant of Grace: I confeſs this is a generally ſuppoſed Principle among Chriſtians, yet it is not well underſtood. *Firſt*, That Covenant which is founded neither in the merit of the Creature, nor in any alluring motive from the Creature, muſt be a Covenant of Grace with the Creature; there are ordinarly two things that influence Tranſactions

and Covenants, the merit of the Creature, or if there be no merit, some alluring motive; *Abimelech* entered in a Covenant with *Isaac*, because he saw that God was with him, *Shechem* is content to enter in a Covenant with *Jacob*'s Children, for *all their cattel* (saith he) *will be ours*: Many will enter in Covenants with others, either on the account of merit, a Master will Covenant with his Servant to pay him his Fee, and that because he hath wrought well; or if there be no merit, they go on some alluring motive, a Man will enter in a Marriage Covenant, sometimes on the account of Beauty, and sometimes on the account of Riches; but God in his entering in a Covenant with us, saw neither merit, nor any alluring motive: As for our Beauty, *Ezekiel* 16. 6. *When I past by thee thou wast cast out in the highway, lying in thy blood, to the shame of thy nakedness, and no eye pitied thee, I passed by thee, and cast my skirt over thee, and thy time was a time of love*: And for our Goodness and Riches, *Psal.* 50. 12. *If he were hungry he needed not tell us, for the cattel upon a thousand hills belong to him*; And *Psal.* 16. 2. *Our Goodness extends not to thee*: He had been no less glorious nor happy, if he had never created Man, it had diminished nothing from his infinite Perfection. Now, a Covenant founded and transacted betwixt Him and us, where there is neither merit, nor any alluring motive, must absolutely be a Covenant of free Will and entire Grace.

But *Secondly*, to evince this yet further, that it is a Covenant absolutely of Grace, compare it with the Covenant of Works, the Covenant made with *Adam*, for in the Covenant made with *Adam*, there was indeed Grace in it, yet not so much Grace as appeared in this Covenant; the Covenant made with *Adam*, was made with a Person that did not merit a Covenant, yet it was made with an innocent Man; However he had not provoked God, yet he did not merit that God should Covenant with him; the Covenant made with *Adam*, was made with an undeserving man indeed: But He makes the Covenant of Grace with his Enemy. *For when we were yet enemies, Christ died for us*, Rom. 5. And he gave himself for the ungodly, and not for the innocent; Any of us may know by our own temper, if we shall make that the measure, whereby to consider Acts of Grace, if a man had never wronged us, nor injured us, in

word or in deed, how ready are we to make peace with Him; but if he had done his outmoſt out of malice and contempt of heart, it is not eaſie to fall under a Covenant with him; The Covenant made with the firſt *Adam*, was made with an innocent Man, that had done nothing to diſoblige Him; But when He made the Covenant of Grace, He made it with fallen man. the ungodly man that was his enemy; Now what a great deal of Grace was there in this, if we had bound up Covenants of friendſhip and fellowſhip with a man, and if he had betrayed and gone contrair to his engagements, and turned implacable and vindictive, would we bind up a Covenant with that man again? And the caſe was ſo, when He treated a Covenant of Grace, He not only ſaw no merit, nor alluring motive, but he ſaw us in a ſtate of enmity, yet that hindered him not to make a Covenant with us.

Thirdly, To ſhew the Grace of this Covenant, conſider the great Bleſſings that he is content to promiſe, and engage for in the Covenant, far greater Bleſſings than the Covenant of Works; Nothing contributes more to evidence it to be a Covenant of Grace, than the conſideration of the Bleſſings promiſed in the Covenant. I ſuppoſe a man ſhould take a Beggar, or a Prince ſhould take a Rebel, and promiſe him his Life, and make him his Kitchin-Boy, and give him liberty to ſcour the Veſſel, and to turn the Roſt, it were much; But if he Indenture with him, that he ſhall feed him with Wine, and Milk, and Honey, and Spices, and give him Gold in his Purſe, and Eye ſalve; Nay more, if he Indenture with him to give him his Son in Marriage, nay, to give him himſelf, conſidering there is neither merit, nor alluring motive for this, the perſon is a Rebel, a baſe unworthy man: In the Covenant of Grace, the Lord hath taken this way to evidence the Grace of it, to ſpeak with reverence, it is impoſſible for him to promiſe greater things, He is at the outmoſt of what he can do, and Men and Angels admire of what he can do; However he be infinite in Power, yet it is impoſſible, to ſpeak with reverence, for the eternal God, to promiſe greater things than Himſelf, and his Son, for all Eternity, and that in ſuch a way, as the Creature can be capable to enjoy; ſo that conſidering the great Bleſſings of the Covenant, not to ſpeak of Pardon, Peace, and Communion, and Joy, but to promiſe Himſelf and his

Son: In the Covenant He promiſes to give His Son to ſuffer, to be a Curſe, and ſubject him to the loweſt things, except Sin, that he could be capable of. It is a great controverſie betwixt us and Papiſts, if He deſcended locally into Hell, we deny it; but we maintain that He had the equivalent of the Pains of Hell on his Spirit; and that Article of our Belief, is to be underſtood of horrour of Spirit; now to advance us to the greateſt priviledges we can be capable of, which are the enjoyment of Himſelf and his Son for all Eternity, in the perfecteſt meaſure we can be capable of, what a deal of Grace is in it?

Furthly, To evidence that its thus a covenant of Grace, conſider on what Terms of the Covenant theſe great things are; & indeed here eſpecially lyes the Grace of the covenant, any would think the Terms behoved to be very high, conſidering the Glory of the Merchant, and the greatneſs of the Marriage; here is the matchleſs Grace of the covenant, the Terms on which all theſe are offered, makes it indeed of Grace; and in reference to the Terms, I will offer theſe five remarkable conſiderations, that evidence it a covenant of Grace. 1. He that offers theſe Commodities, offers them with a free Diſcharge of all bygone Debts. If for the future the covenant will be embraced, this is a remarkable Article, to evidence the freedom of the Terms, there is no blaſphemous perſon like *Paul*, none that hath had ſeven Devils like *Mary Magdalen*, there is no perſecutor like *Manaſſeh*, its ſuppoſed he was one of the moſt terrible perſecutors, of whom the Apoſtle *Heb.* 11. ſpeaks *of ſawing aſunder*, he ſawed *Iſaiah* aſunder with a Saw, and no Publican like *Matthew*, no denyer of Chriſt like *Peter*, no murderer and adulterer like *David*; no perſon of whatſoever guilt, except one Sin, He hath excepted the Sin againſt His Spirit, but he is content in the Covenant, if any embrace and take hold of the offers, He will paſs all bygones, if there be accurat walking for the time to come. 2*ly*. Its remarkable in the Terms, that he requires no other Condition, but allenarly Faith, and its Concomitants; this is in effect as much as a free Diſcharge, and ye ſhall not pay for it, only humly and thankfully accept of it; Faith is altogether conſiſtent with Grace: ſuppoſe there were a great man would offer a Begger a Talent, is it not an Alms, and an Act of Grace,

Grace, if there be no more required of the Begger, but to take the Alms? The Covenant of Grace runs it this Channel, only believe, accept of the offer of my Self, and of my Son, for all eternity, and this is all that is required. 3*ly*. The least degree of this acceptance providing it be sincere and not counterfit, the Covenant accepts of it; if your Faith be as the Grain of Mustard-seed, suppose it be never so small, if it be not counterfit, the covenant accepts of it. And *lastly*, the covenant accepts of it, though it be mixed with much corruption; that poor man in the Gospel that came crying to Christ, hath a kindly answer, *Help me, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief*, Mark 9 23. My Faith hath a great deal of dross among it, it is as large unbelief, as Faith, *but, Lord, help my unbelief*. Now the covenant that runs on these Terms, is not this a covenant absolutely of Grace?

But *lastly*, to add no more, its evident to be a covenant of Grace, if ye consider the way how this covenant is followed; its not only without merit, and alluring motives, its not only made with fallen Man, & not only with an innocent Man, not only holds it out the greatest things God can give, and on the freest Terms: But lastly, its evident to be a covenant of Grace, if we consider how He follows it, I will name but three or four things how He follows it, and they will evidence it yet further to be a covenant of Grace. 1. He is the first seeker and offerer of a covenant; any body would think that we should begin the motion, for we were the men that had the toom hand, and he had the full; but yet He is the beginner, and He may say of any when they are effectually called, and brought under the Bond of the covenant, I *am found of them that sought me not, and sought of them that asked not for me*, *ady*. It's remarkable in the way of following it, that the persons whom He follows, they are not only in all things equal with others, but several times they are made worse than others, if ye take a view of them in their natural priviledges: was not *Esau Jacobs* Brother, and the elder Brother, & had the Birth-right, *Yet Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*: Ordinarily these that He follows to bring under the covenant, are alike in all things, two lying in one Womb, two grinding at the Miln, two on the house top; yet He makes a covenant with the one, and

passes

passes by the other: but often they are worse than others, oft-times ye will find them simpler than others, they are the fooliſh things, *things that are not*; yea ſometimes they are very ignorant, and that in the great things of the Goſpel, the ſubtilities of Philoſophy are almoſt ridiculous to them; yea, many times they are the worſt and greateſt of ſinners that He brings under the Bond of the Covenant, the like of *Paul*, of *Peter*, of *Manaſſeh*. Now that He ſhould follow the Covenant thus, that He ſhould follow them that have the ſame things naturally, they are pieces of Clay out of the ſame Pit, they are Stones out of the ſame Quarrie, and that He ſhould make choiſe of one like a ſhrub, and the things He leaves like tall Cedars. What a deal of Grace is there in it, that he ſhould take the ſhrub and pick upon it, bring it under the Covenant, and leave them that are wiſe for Wit and Learning. 3*ly*. If ye take a view of this, the Grace of the Covenant will appear, that after He hath ſought them, and found them, and feltered them, and bound them with the Cords of the Covenant: the Grace of it appears in this, that once bound, and ay bound: its everlaſting, there is no getting out under it again: it contributes to evidence the Grace of the Covenant, that He will bide ſo many refuſals, that He will *ſtand, and knock at the door, untill his head be wet with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night*, and then put His hand in at the hole of the Lock, if he can get but an hole in the door, though he cannot get an open door, He will put in His Finger at the hole of the door, and drop in Myrrhe upon the handles of the Lock: may not all theſe things evidence the Grace of the Covenant; but nothing evidences it more than this, that no unbelief, no guiltineſs will caſt without the Covenant again; if once in Covenant with Him, once in, and ay in it: Thus he Covenanted with *David*, if his Children offend, He will correct them with the Rods of men, *He will viſit their iniquity with rods, and their tranſgreſſions with ſtripes*, He will ſend them to Priſons, and to Scaffolds, *but his preſence nor his loving kindneſs will be not take from them*. Now lay all theſe together, and I hope I have evinced to you, that this Covenant is abſolutely and intirely a Covenant of Grace.

Queſt. I would clear one Objection before I give you the

the Reaſons of it: May not ſome ſay, are there not conditions in the Covenant, and are they not difficult, if not impoſſible to be performed? Can that be a Covenant of Grace, that calls for Self-denial, taking up the Croſs, for Repenting, for Faith, for being Holy as God is Holy? Nay, more, it calls for all the Duties of the Covenant of Works, and more; for the covenant of Works bound *Adam* neither to Repentance, nor Faith; but this Covenant binds to Obedience to the whole Law, and to Repentance, and Believing, which the Covenant of Works did not; and can this be a Covenant of Grace that runs on this channel?

For Anſwer to this Queſtion, *Antinomians* indeed ſay, there are no conditions, and therefore they deny it to be a proper Covenant; they ſay, its rather a Promiſe than a Covenant; we maintain there are conditions in it, and all theſe things are true, it binds to Obedience to the whole Law; but there are three things in the Conditions, that in effect make them nothing contrair to this, that its a Covenant of Grace. 1. There is no condition to be performed in our own ſtrength: a man goes quite from the Covenant of Grace, that would wring Repentance out of his own heart, or that would Pray, or Preach, or Hear, in his own ſtrength; indeed this ſuited well with the Covenant of Works; and when we go like *Sampſon* in our own ſtrength, we go directly from the covenant of Grace; the Father in the Covenant, hath appointed a Nurſe to bear us up. He hath appointed a Tutor to govern and guide us, a Purſe-maſter to bear our Stock, *ſo that of our ſelves, as of our ſelves, we can do nothing*; according to the Tenor of the covenant of Grace, we are to do nothing; whether to ſuffer, to pray, to preach, to hear, the covenant is ſo well contrived, that all theſe things called for, are not called for in our own ſtrength, we break the covenant, if we wring them out in our own ſtrength; the main thing is to lay our Stock in Chriſts hand, whether to do, or to ſuffer, its according to the Tenor of the covenant, that we ſhould be ſupplied by his Grace, that we ſhould have Wiſdom, Sanctification and all from Him, which is a neceſſary thing for Believers to obſerve, that take them to the covenant of Grace; they are ſometimes exceedingly prejudged, by not eyeing this covenant, when they pray,

or

or go to hear, they think the furniture they have from Grace, or the habitual Grace they have, will carry them through the duty; no, ye break the covenant, if ye eye not Him in all things the covenant calls for. 2*ly*. Although there be many conditions in the covenant, yet nothing is a condition on our part, but its a Promiſe on Gods part; there cannot be that Duty inſtanced in all the covenant, for which there is not a Promiſe; ſo is the buſineſs contrived; as if ye ſaw a Merchant that lays out a piece of cloth to a man to buy, and the man hath no money to buy it with, but he engageth to give him money; but before he buy it, the Merchant promiſeth to give him Money to buy it with: ſo there is no Duty, let it be named Mortification, or Vivification, there is no Grace required, or Duty to be performed, but there is a Promiſe in reference to that Grace, and that Duty. Now ſince there is no Condition on our part, but there is a Promiſe on Gods part; the Condition makes nothing againſt the Covenant. 3*ly*. There is no Condition in the Covenant, the want whereof will caſt us out of the Covenant; its remarkable, the Covenant betwixt God and us, the Covenant of Grace, is not made as a bargain betwixt two men; wherein they engage, I vow and promiſe to do this to you, providing you do this to me, I will give you ſuch a Sum of Money, if you give me againſt ſuch a day ſuch a piece of Cloth, and if he bring it not againſt ſuch a day, the other is looſed from the condition of the Money: where there is a Conditional bargain, he that fails on the one part of the condition, he looſes the other, its not a binding obligation: Its not ſo in this Covenant, though there be conditions in the Covenant, our not fulfilling of the condition, looſes not God from His part of it, if there be any thing that would looſe Him, Faith being the great condition of the covenant it would be the want of Faith; if we believe not, *yet he abides faithful, he cannot deny himſelf*. There are conditions in the Covenant; but there is no condition required ſo, that if once we be in the Covenant, will looſe God from the condition on His part of it, the reaſon of it is, the Cautioner in the Covenant, becomes bound for our failing in the Covenant, and what is wanting in our Sanctification and Obedience, the Lord gets ſatisfaction for it in Chriſts Righteouſneſs:

So

So there are conditions and great things required; yet they make nothing againſt its being a Covenant of Grace. I hope from this, I have in this Sermon abundantly evinced, that this everlaſting Covenant, is properly a Covenant of Grace, though it hath conditions in it.

SERMON VIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

ITs an Act of Grace that GOD did ever condeſcend to any kind of Covenant with Man, ſo great a GOD, but to make ſuch a Covenant, a Covenant of Promiſes, and of ſo great and precious Promiſes, we may indeed do as the Builders that builded the ſecond Temple, cry Grace, grace unto him. I was proving in the Forenoon, that this Covenant was a Covenant of Grace, notwithſtanding of all the Conditions in it: Before I proceed in the following of it, I would have you notice, that when the Covenant is called a Covenant of Grace, ye are to ſuppoſe, that the Grace of the Covenant hath theſe three properties. 1. Its a Covenant of pure unmixed Grace, there is nothing but Grace in it, there is neither merit, nor motive, and therefore the whole contrivement of it is Grace and only Grace. 2*ly*. While we call it a Covenant of Grace, it is not only to be underſtood of pure and unmixed Grace, but of perfect Grace; the Grace in the Covenant is advanced to ſo great a hight, as the definition of perfection agrees to it. Moraliſts ſay, that that is perfect in which nothing is wanting, and to which nothing can be added; now the Grace of the Covenant is of this nature. 3*ly*. When we call it a Covenant of Grace, its to be underſtood of perſevering Grace, Grace which cannot be changed: Some things may be pure and perfect, but they are variable: the moſt part of the kindneſſes of Creatures are of this nature; let them run like a burn in a ſpeat, yet Summer comes, and they

they dry, its not so with the Fountain. They say, the Original of all Springs is the Ocean, and that the Waters grow fresh running through the Bowels of the Earth, and they must drain the Ocean, ere they drain the Spring; no wonder then it be persevering Grace; so that when we call it a Covenant of Grace, the meaning is, its a Covenant of pure unmixed Grace, perfect and full Grace, and of persevering and continuing Grace. But before I improve this, the calling it a Covenant of Grace, because it will have a great influence on all the Sermons following, I would clear two or three Questions that may come in, as Objections against the Covenants being a Covenant of Grace.

Quest. 1. It may be Objected, what Reasons or Motives, since there was neither Meriting, nor Moving considerations, what rise could this Covenant have, to be a Covenant of pure, perfect, and persevering Grace? These that write of this Head, bring a number of Reasons, they say, that God intended to humble man, and to make him inexcusable, for when he shall Judge him at the great Day, he will have nothing that will be a cloak of excuse, according to that Word, *Joh.* 15. 22. *If I had not come unto them, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin,* To refuse a Covenant of Grace, takes off all cloak of excuse; I deny not, but there may be many Reasons why he made it a Covenant of so pure, perfect, and persevering Grace; but I conceive, the special Reasons why its so made, may be reduced to these two. 1. He made it thus of Grace, that it might be sure, *Rom.* 4. 16. *Therefore it is of Faith and by Grace, that the promise might be sure to the seed*: Mark there its by Grace, that the Promise might be sure; had God entred with us in a Covenant on any Terms in the World, but Grace, it would never have been sure, suppose we had been as perfect as *Adam*; and had had as great a Stock of Grace within us, yet He would never make a Bargain with the like of us, who were so changeable things, if the bottom of the Bargain had not been Grace; therefore its through Faith, and by Grace, that the Promise might be sure to the Seed; He knew what we were, when we were at our best, when we were new come off the Stocks, and were new come from His Hands

by,

by Creation; probably *Adam* ſtood not above five Hours, and what would a Covenant with the like of us ſignifie, if it ſtood not on Grace? 2*ly*. He made it thus of Grace, that He might exalt Chriſt: the ſecuring of us, and the exalting of His Son, both contribute exceedingly to His own Glory; afterward I will make it out to you, if the Lord will, that the Father is infinitely more Glorified in the Covenant of Grace, than if the Covenant of Works had ſtood: but the great deſign He had in making a Covenant of Grace, was to ſecure us, and exalt His Son; the Covenant runs on theſe Terms, that in all Duties, in all our ſufferings we muſt ay go to Chriſt for ſtrength. But if any would ask our Right to the Crown, what Ground we have to think, that he will not caſt us in Hell? how we will pray, how we will ſuffer, and believe, and how we think to be freed from Hell? The Anſwer of all theſe Queſtions is in one word, in Chriſt the Covenant is ſo contrived, as when we have to do for Wiſdom, Sanctification, Righteouſneſs, Redemption, the truth is, in the Covenant, Chriſt is made all things. *He is the way, the truth, and the life, the door, the bread, the drink, and the apparel*; the Apoſtle ſums them up in one word, *He is all in all*: Now the exalting of His Son, never was there ſo ſubmiſſive a Son to the Father, He was his Equal, and was content to be trampled on, and in a manner bruiſed, therefore the exalting of his Son, is the great contrivement of the Covenant; ſo that in effect, it is of Grace, both that the Promiſe might be ſure to the Seed, and that Chriſt might be exalted; in both which, the Glory of the Father is more advanced, than in all the Works of Creation and Providence; and that clears the firſt difficulty, why God reſolved to make it a Covenant of Grace?

Queſt. 2. The ſecond Difficulty againſt this, that its thus a Covenant of pure, perfect, and perſevering Grace, How can this ſtand with the Juſtice of God, and with His Holineſs? God is naturally juſt, and infinitely juſt, and He as neceſſarly puniſhes ſin, as the fire burns, or as a weighty thing moves downward? Its remarkable, the Scripture tells, *He cannot behold iniquity, nor ſuffer it to go unpuniſhed*; Now to make with Rebels, and ſwear a Covenant, to accept of unperfect holineſs, to accept

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of the will for the Deed, to *pardon iniquity*, to *caſt their ſins in the bottom of the ſea*; to tell them in the Covenant, *the iniquity of Jacob ſhall be ſought for, and not be found*; How ſtands this with Juſtice? doth not Grace prevail over Juſtice?

Anſwer, For Anſwer to this, know, that this Covenant of Grace, is made on all theſe Terms that I ſpoke of in the Forenoon, without the leaſt violation of Juſtice, and two things will evidence the truth of this. 1. Chriſt the Mediator of the Covenant, before He could accompliſh and order a Covenant of Grace, He treated a Covenant of Redemption. I think indeed, that is a proper Covenant, though generally Foreign and Domeſtick Divines have not adverted to it, yet many of late, have ſeen all the eſſentials of a Covenant in it; in the Son (before the Covenant of Grace was, in all the particulars of it Tranſacted) He Tranſacted a Covenant of Redemption with the Father, wherein He undertook to ſatisfie Juſtice, and the Covenant of Grace runs in ſo free a current and channel, on the account of the Mediator's Indenturing the Covenant of Redemption. *2ly.* Its no wrong to Juſtice, to accept of a Cautioner, there was Mercy in the midſt of it; there was Grace in the Fathers accepting a ſatisfaction from the Son: The Schoolmen ſpeak of the Fathers uniting the God-head with the Manhood, and ſo glorifying the humane Nature, and he accepting of a ſatisfaction from the humane nature, was an Act of Grace, yet ſuch an Act of Grace as Juſtice was ſatisfied fully by a Perſon that had not committed the Deed: *Zaleucus* emitted a Law, that whoſoever committed Adultery in his Kingdom, both their eyes ſhould be put out, and when the Heir of his own Kingdom committed Adultery, he appointed one of his eyes to be put out, and one of his own, becauſe he thought that the Perſon that ſinned ſhould ſuffer: but this was neither perfect ſufferings, nor perfect ſatisfaction to Juſtice; but here Juſtice is abundantly ſatisfied, though the perſon ſinning, was not the perſon ſufferer; to be brief, the Covenant of Grace being a reſult of the Covenant of Redemption, wherein the Mediator undertook the paying of the ſinners Debt, its abundantly ſatisfying to Juſtice, and *Mercy and Juſtice kiſs one another*; for Mercy has gotten full ſcope, and Juſtice has gotten full Satisfaction.

Quest. 3. The third Question I will move against this Truth, That its a Covenant of Grace; some may say, there might have been more Grace in it than there is, there might have been Promises of perfect Holiness; now in all the Bible, we have no Promise of perfect Sanctification: and which makes this the more difficult, we are commanded to endeavour perfection, and yet we have no promise of perfection in all the Scripture, we cannot go to God in Faith, and pray to make us perfect in this life, for we can Pray for nothing in Faith, whereof we want a Promise; so that it would seem, its not of such perfect Grace, as I have been saying, for there is not in all the Bible a Promise of perfection.

Answer. For the clearing of this, I will offer you these three things. 1. Its the nature of sincerity to aim at perfection, it stands as it were on its Tip-toes, and stretches its Arms to it; its true they are but Childrens Arms, and are but weak, and cannot reach far off, yet there is never sincerity, but there is an aim at perfection, therefore ye shall find the truly Godly, the most part of their Exercises run not on the want of Grace, but on the weakness, insufficiency, and the Imperfection of Grace; The great reason is, sincerity will be constantly complaining, until it be perfect, until it reach *the Resurrection of the Dead*; therefore there comes in the heart that is upright ay some complaints, alas I cannot get grief proportioned to sin, I cannot get love to God, alas, I cannot grieve enough for sin; its called perfection in Scripture, because is aims at perfection, and will ay be complaining until it be perfect. 2*ly*. Know this, that though in all the Covenant there is not a Promise of perfection, nor perfect Sanctification, no, not one, until we come to Glory, and until the *Woman clothed with the Sun, have the Moon under her feet*, there the Crown will be set on, and love and delight will be perfected; the great Reason is, because perfection here would neither suit our Duty, nor our case, no, were there perfection of Holiness here, it would overturn the whole frame of the Covenant, which is, that we shall go to Christ for pardon, for healing, for making up of wants: Perfection would be inconsistent with all these, beside to be perfect here, would neither suit with time nor place; take the

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fineſt Gold, or the beſt Jewels, and lay them in a reikie houſe, readily they would get the ſmell of the reik: Its remarkable, even *Paul* was in danger to be puffed up with abundance of Revelations, therefore its no wonder, for as great as the Promiſes are that perfection be not promiſed, for the Jewel would be in a reikie houſe, and we would be puffed up with abundance of Revelations; ſo its no way inconſiſtent with the Covenant its being a Covenant of Grace, that the roving Patient hath not from the Phyſician all that he crys for, the Phyſician gives what is ſuitable and agreeable to the Nature of his caſe, ſo the Covenant is of perfect Grace, becauſe it contains Promiſes of perfection, and ſo much Grace as was neceſſar for our caſe.

Queſt. 4. The fourth Difficulty I would move againſt this, the Covenant its being a Covenant of Grace. Doth it not contain the Croſs, and are there not a multitude of Clauſes in it, bearing Afflictions and Croſſes? And indeed, ſome have obſerved, the threatning part of Afflictions in the Covenant, it often holds as true as the promiſing part of Peace and Pardon, which may be a very great ſcruple ſometimes in one, that has taken them to the Covenant, and has reſolved not to follow the guiſe of the World, they will credit the Promiſes, and take them to the Covenant, and in the mean time, the only part of the Covenant that is moſt verified, is that part which contains the Croſs; the Promiſes of *ſupping with him, and bringing them into the banqueting-houſe*, they know little of that: But as for that part of the Covenant, they know he hath been a *true and faithful witneſs*, and true to his word: now the queſtion is, looks this like the Covenant of Grace?

Anſ. For Anſwer to this, I deſire ye may take notice of three things, firſt, Take notice what the Covenant removes in reference to the Croſs, and we may go to God and peremptorily preſs Him, for removing theſe, nay readily He is faithful and true in removing of them. 1. Several times He will remove the Curſe and Sting of the Croſs, all the Elect meet with that; The Covenant has promiſed, and rather threatens the Croſs, but withal its added, it ſhall come like a Bee, it may come bumming and making a noiſe, but it wants the Sting, and one

needs not be afraid of a Bee that wants a Sting; the Covenant has promiſed, that in reference to the Croſs, the Curſe and Sting are both removed. 2*ly*. The Covenant has promiſed, the proportioning of the Croſs to our ſhoulders, its indeed a ſpecial promiſe to that purpoſe, *He will not ſuffer them to be tempted above what they are able to bear*; He knows that which would be baſaſt to one Veſſel, would drown another; therefore he calls a Chriſtian to ſuffer according as they have gotten Grace, every one is not for the ſervice that others are for, readily if He give Effectual Calling, Pardon, Communion with Himſelf, and Peace; one to ten thouſand, if that Perſon go to the grave without ſome ſignal Croſs; ſo the Covenant ſecures theſe two, it ſecures againſt the Curſe and Sting of the Croſs, and againſt a diſproportioned Croſs to our ſtrength. 3*ly*. The Covenant ſecures of help under the Croſs, it bears them up, its a wonder to ſee how that part of the Covenant has been accompliſhed, when I come to the ordering of the Covenant, I will have occaſion to ſpeak of it: theſe that have ſometime in their life been ſinking under fears, ſo that the leaſt noiſe of leaves on a Tree in the night time, and even their own ſhadow on the wall would have feared them, in the time of Perſecution, have chearfully ſuffered themſelves to be *caſt to the lions, and in the fire*; The great Reaſon is, the Covenant engaged for ſtrength under the Croſs; and the Lord has promiſed, if he call *David* to go againſt *Goliah*, He ſhal deal with him as *Saul* did with *David*, he ſhall get on the King's Armour to fight with. 4*ly*. He has ſecured this by the Covenant, that the Croſs ſhall be the way to the Crown; I deny not but there may be ſome in Glory, but certainly they will be rare, who have not come through Afflictions and Tribulations: and if they be in Glory, they ſhall among the leaſt in the Kingdom of God; the Captain came through Afflictions, and why ſhould not the Souldiers; The Scripture ſpeaks generally, *Theſe are they that have come through great tribulation*, its the Teſtimony given to the generality of them, in ſome period of their life or other, they have ſome ſignal Tribulation, and the Scripture tells us, *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him*: So the Covenant ſecures againſt all theſe, againſt the Curſe and Sting of the Croſs,

Croſs, againſt a diſpropottioned croſs to our ſtrength, ſtrength under it, and the way to the Crown.

Secondly, Conſider that ſometimes the Croſs is as neceſſary as a Manifeſtation may be, however indeed we would be ay at carving out our own cordials, and like children, would have our hand full, and our ſenſe and our eye filled; yet the Croſs may be as neceſſary as the great priviledges of the Covenant, therefore ye find ſometimes the Croſs made a Promiſe, as *Hoſea* 2. 6. *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a way that ſhe ſhall not find her paths*: And *ver.* 7. *And ſhe ſhall follow after her lovers, and ſhall not overtake them: and ſhe ſhall ſeek them, and ſhall not find them*; and the reſult is, then ſhall ye ſay, *I will go and return to my firſt Husband, for then it was better with me than now.* Many a time *David* ſung this Song in the Pſalms, eſpecially *Pſal.* 119. *It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes: Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word*; Therefore its not inconſiſtent with the Grace of the Covenant, that there be imperfect Sanctification, and the Croſs in it.

Queſt. 5. The laſt Difficulty that I would remove is, that its a Covenant of pure and perfect Grace, Might it not remove our fears, though it keep us under imperfect holineſs and the Croſs; However the Covenant had not carried us up above affliction, would it not have been a Covenant of perfect Grace, if it had done this alms deed, to ſecure the Elect againſt their fears, eſpecially ſince they are not only fears of ſin, but fears of Hell, and ſervile, and deſpondent fears?

Anſw. For anſwer to this, I will offer you theſe three things. 1. The Covenant hath done as much againſt fears, as was neceſſary to it, for the Covenant hath declared ſervile fear to be ſin, and hath expreſly forbidden them; it's ſpoken of the reprobat, *they ſhall be in fear where no fear is*: The Covenant often quarrels them, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* So the Covenant condemns theſe ſervile fears and quatrels for them, as a plague inflicted on the reprobat. 2. Take notice, that a multitude of theſe fears, they ordinarly come on Believers, when they are furtheſt out of ſight of the Covenant, they forget the Covenant: the great ground of theſe fears is, from their reading the Covenant of Works, when they ſhould read

ovenant of Grace; it's not from the Covenant of ce that they have these fears, for the answer of these ars is from the Covenant; the great ground why Believers are swallowed up with these fears, is, because they understand not the Doctrine of the Covenant, or if they understand it, they forget it. 3. To say no more, ye shall know that the Covenant holds out Promises, even against these fears; thou may possibly have a plaister lying beside thee for a sore, and if ye lay it not on, it cannot cure: There may be fears on thee, and there lies in the Bible, in the room thou lies in, a plaister of the Covenant, that would remeed and cure these fears, but thou lays it not to, therefore the pain continues; several times its the not applying the Covenant, and not the want of the Covenant, that makes the pain continue. Our countrey man Mr. *Dickson*, hath written a Book *Therapeutice*, the Title of it is, *The curing of all diseases*, by the application of the Covenant.

Use. For use of the Doctrine, the consideration of the *Covenant* as *a Covenant* of Grace, I confess it's the greatest encouragement, if we were going to ly down in the Grave, that I could imagine, therefore hearken a little to the improving of it, and I would direct the improving of the *Covenant* of Grace to three sorts of persons, 1. There are some Beginners, that have never to this day known, what a personal *Covenant* with God was; and readily they may be at this, O! I hear of so great things in the *Covenant*, there is *wine, milk, honey, eye-salve, gold, fine linen, spices*, and I have heard, that God cannot make greater Promises; and to speak with reverence, it is impossible for him to make greater; and shall the like of me a poor ignorant polluted thing make a *Covenant* with him? I confess thou hast reasoned well, if thou had been under a *Covenant* of Works, but since thou art under a *Covenant* of Grace, I will say but these three things to thee. 1. If thou wilt go home this night, and give him thy hand, and Indenture with him, to be true and faithful to him, though thou hast no money, all these things shall be given thee *without money and without price*. 2. I will say more to thee, though thou hast *played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me*. Nay 3. I will say yet more to thee, whatever thy guiltiness hath been, and

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though thou has been a Tranſgreſſour from the
yet if thou wilt yet go, and ſeriouſly Indenture wit
and enter in a perſonal *Covenant*, for the time to
all former bygones ſhall be bygones, and thy wa
money, and want of price to give for all theſe thin
ſhall be no hinderance to thee, and the great reaſon I
give for this, it is a *Covenant* of Grace, therefore go and
Indenture with him, and take the tide of it, it may be the
Maſter will riſe and cloſe the door on you, and if ye be
found without, and go down to the Grave one of theſe
days, ye may meet with *Depart from me I know you not*:
therefore take the tide ſo long as the Mercat laſts, and go
and engage in this *Covenant* of Grace.

A ſecond ſort it ſpeaks to, if it be a *Covenant* of Grace,
it ſpeaks a word of reproof to you, that do not notice
and take it up as a *Covenant* of Grace; and there are three
ſorts that take it not up ſo. 1. There are ſome that
would take up the *Covenant* of Grace for a *Covenant* of Li-
berty and Licentiouſneſs; indeed it is a *Covenant* of
Grace, but not of Liberty, & thou that wilt go & neglect
Prayer, and be a ſtranger to all the acts of Fellowſhip
with God, and of Grace, and will go follow thy Luſts,
and will talk of a *Covenant* of Grace, thou calls it a Co-
venant of Liberty, and of all creatures he will be angry
with, and be avenged of, it will be thou. 2. It reproves
theſe that never will deal with God by way of a *Covenant*
of Grace, but by way of a *Covenant* of Works, ay when
they come to him, they would ay have money in their
hand, to give for the *wine, milk, and honey*; proud man
cannot endure to hold of free Grace, of all the Doctrines
of the World, it hath been moſt oppoſed in the Church,
Papiſts, Socinians, Arminians, Lutherans, they become ge-
nerally enemies to it. 3. It reproves theſe that though
they acknowledge it to be a *Covenant* of Grace, and with-
out merit, and alluring motive, yet they would have it
a *Covenant* of a mixed nature, they would have ſome mix-
ture of ſome things of their own, in with the Grace of
GOD: therefore they go conſtanly trembling, alas I
have ſuch a heart, and ſuch a way, I have no love to God
nor delight in him, therefore they will caſt away hope,
as if the *Covenant* were a *Covenant*, partly of Grace, and
partly of Works, no, it's a *Covenant* of pure and unmix-

ce, it is a *Covenant* of perfect and full Grace, it is nant of perſevering and continuing Grace, now go o turn it into a *Covenant* of another nature: But ce the Father hath reſolved to exalt Chriſt and his race, ſubſcribe to the Tenor of the *Covenant*.

Thirdly, It ſerves to preſs Believers to make uſe of it, as a *Covenant* of Grace; I will tell you three or four things wherein I will eſpecially preſs you to make uſe of it as a *Covenant* of Grace. 1. If ye have any great thing to ſeek from God, may be ſome have a Temporal thing to ſeek from him, they have a ſtrait to come thorow; may be ſome have a Spiritual thing to ſeek, they have committed a ſin, and would have pardon for it, and they can ſcarcely expect that God will hear them; take up this Covenant as a Covenant of Grace, it is the nature of this Covenant, to give Pardon freely, *without money and without price*; and if ye go to him, and ſay, Lord bring me out of ſuch a ſtrait, Lord, forgive me ſuch a ſin, and ye think ye will not be heard, why? I have no money to give for it; but let the Papiſts give their Pardons, its not ſo in this Covenant. 2. Make uſe of it in anſwering all challenges, I will have occaſion when I come to that, *Although my houſe be not ſo with God*, To let you ſee, how the Covenant anſwers challenges, I believe its the thing that makes many Chriſtians ſpend the moſt part of their Religion in complaints, they are either ignorant, or forgetful of the Covenant. 3. Improve it in all external difficulties; In a word, there is no cauſe, no incident caſe, no challenge, no difficulty, no Petition we carry to God, but the conſideration of the Covenant, and of all the Promiſes of it, as an act of free favour and Grace, may be eminently uſeful to them. Learn all of you to take it up as a Covenant of Grace; and take heed, when God hath given you a Covenant of Grace, and the Mediator hath purchaſed it, that ye deal not ordinarly with your ſelf, as if ye were under a Covenant of Works.

SERMON

SERMON IX.

2 Samuel 23. *Verſe* 5.

Although my Houſe be not ſo with GOD; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Propoſed in this Verſe five particulars to be handled; *Firſt*, The nature of *Davids* ſecurity, it is a Covenant, I have ſpoken to this in ſome preceeding Sermons, and purpoſed to dwell no more on it; Therefore I come to the ſecond Branch of the words, The Parties among whom this Covenant is Tranſacted, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*: That I may the better reach what is comprehended in this Branch of the Verſe, I deſire ye may take notice of four particulars in it. Ye have the Author and efficient cauſe of this Covenant, *The Lord hath made*. *He* doth not ſay, I have made with the Lord, but *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*. 2. Ye have the Parties concerned in this Covenant, *the Lord and me*. 3. I ſhall take notice of the particulars, and perſonal way of covenanting, or expreſſing theſe Parties; he ſays not, the Lord and Chriſt, and the Lord and all the Elect have made a Covenant, but the Lord hath made with me *Perſonally*. *Laſtly*, I ſhall take notice of the Aſſurance, which his confident aſſerting of it imports, he can affirm it with a deal of confidence, as a thing he is perſwaded of, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*: Theſe four ly all in the Text.

The firſt particular holds out the Author of the Covenant, the Lord is the Maker of it, as he is the Maker of Heaven and of Earth, ſo it is he that made the Covenant; the word is Emphatick in the Hebrew, its true it is not the proper word that ſignifies to create; yet ſome Criticks think, it is ſometimes uſed for creation, *The Lord hath created with me a Covenant*, yet I take it as it is rendred in our Tranſlation, and in this Sermon I will ſpeak a little to this Doctrine, Though *the benefit of the Covenant redound*

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to us, yet we were not the makers of it, but God made it; it has the ſmell of his Hand in it, and the making of it is frequently in the Scripture aſcribed to him, *Iſa.* 55. 3. *Incline your ear and come to me, hear and your ſoul ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David.* Jer. 31. 31. *It ſhall come to paſs in thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt; but this ſhall be the covenant, after thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it their hearts, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* Conſtantly throughout the Scripture the making of the covenant, he takes it to himſelf as the Author of it, and the efficient cauſe of it; this Branch of the Verſe is conſiderable, for the truth is, we had no hand in the making of the covenant of Grace, it was allanerly himſelf, the Lord made it with me,

That I may clear this Branch a little to you, I will dwell on theſe three things, *1ſt*, I ſhall enquire into what reſpects the Covenant may be ſaid to be made by the Lord. *2ly.* I ſhall give you ſome grounds to evince, that in all theſe reſpects that it was made, and only could be made by him. And 3. ſhall apply it.

Queſt. Firſt, In what reſpects the Covenant may be ſaid to be made by the Lord, I ſhall deſire that ye may notice theſe four or five particulars here.

Anſw. 1. The contrivement of the Covenant in all the Heads, Clauſes, and Articles of it, was allanerly from him, it was he that contrived it in all the clauſes, and Articles of it; the truth is, it contains a deſign very ſuitable to his Wiſdom, if ye will take a view of three Myſteries into it, ye will find it proceed from the depth of infinite Wiſdom. 1. If ye will take a view of the Truths in it, O! ſuch a ſtrange Truth, one Perſon to be both GOD and Man, How difficult was that to reconcile? He was *Mary's* Son, yet *Mary's* Maker; that he was *David's* Son, yet *David's* Lord; What a ſtrange Myſtery is that in the Covenant, that Chriſt ſhould be altogether free of ſin, and yet juſtly ſuffer for ſin? The great Myſteries in the Covenant, in reference to the Truths holden out in it, evidence that the contrivement of it, could

could only proceed from God. 2. If ye will take a view, not of the Truths only, but of the Duties required in the Covenant; what a number of ſtrange Duties are contained in it, that never have entred into the heart of man? *Numa Pompilius*, that gave Laws to the *Romans*, *Lycurgus* that gave Laws to the *Lacedemonians*, *Solon* that gave Laws to the *Athenians*, their Laws never dreamed of believing, and being ſaved by anothers Righteouſneſs; ſuch Duties, as taking up of the Croſs, denying our ſelves, walking by anothers ſtrength, and doing all that we do, by a Spirit of Promiſe, Would ever Natures Light have reached theſe Duties of the Covenant? So take a view of theſe, and ye will find that the contrivement of it could only come from God. 3. Take a view of the Perſons admitted to the Covenant, if we had a ſecret to communicate readily we would chuſe, not the ſimple, or the fooliſh, or babes, to communicat it to, we would pitch on the Learned, on the wiſe, on the prudent; but the Covenant is ſo contrived, that the Truths of it are the greateſt Myſteries; one Perſon to be both God and Man, and that Perſon to be both the Son and the Maker of his Mother, that the Duties of it are ſtrange, one to live by anothers Righteouſneſs, and that all theſe things ſhould be revealed to Babes, and the things that are not, and that the learned, and wiſe, and prudent, ſhould be paſſed by; ſuch a contrivement, had it proceeded from any man or Angel, it had juſtly been accounted the moſt ridiculous and ſtrange Fancy in the World; as a famous Antient ſaid of Chriſtianity, that if he were not perſwaded, it immediately proceeded from God, it would be the Religion of any that ever he heard, that he would be further from Believing; therefore the Covenant is from God, for the contrivement of it, in all the myſtical Truths of it, in all the Duties it requires, and the Perſon to whom theſe Duties and Truths are communicat, evidences it to be from God.

Secondly, As the contrivement of the Covenant is from God, ſo the Terms of the Covenant are made by him, he not only hath made his own, but our Terms, before we were, the Covenant was, and in ſome reſpect, it was from Eternity, from Everlaſting, and before ever we were capable to give our conſent, he ordered both his own Terms and ours.

Queſt.

Queſt. Readily ye will ſay, Was not this an injury to us, that he ſhould make the Covenant ſo, as to make our Terms, as well as his own?

Anſw. For Anſwering this, ye may remember ſome Sabbaths ago, I opened to you, That it was a Deſpotick Covenant, ſuch as is made betwixt Prince and Subject, Maſter and Servant, Land-lord and Tennents, that he is abſolute Lord and hath power to give Laws. 2. Take notice, that Chriſt the Mediator hath repreſented us in the Covenant, and ſo we had him like a Commiſſioner in a Shire, having a Commiſſion to go to Parliament, and giving his Vote for the Shire, he repreſents that Shire from whom he hath the Commiſſion: So we had a Repreſentative, in the perſon of a Mediator in the Covenant. 3. The Terms are made ſo, as it was impoſſible to imagine them to be more to our advantage, could there be an eaſier clauſe put in, than that we ſhould accept? This is all that is required on our part, that we ſhall conſent; now ſince the contrivement of the Covenant, and the Terms on which it runs, proceeds both from God, it may juſtly be ſaid that he hath made the Covenant.

Thirdly, He is ſaid to have made the Covenant, in regard the furniture for doing our part of the Covenant, proceeds alſo from him, whatever is neceſſary on his part, or our part, and the truth is, he ſtands on both ſides of the Covenant, engaged to furniſh what is neceſſary for the Elect; the Father is as much engaged, for performing their part of the Covenant as his own? They are bound by the Covenant to repent, to believe, to walk humbly and holily; all the things that are Terms on their part, he is engaged to furniſh them; they could contribute no more to it, than as ye ſaw a Potter that takes a piece of clay, and divides it in two, and the one part of it he caſts it by, and caſts it in the gutter & treads on it, and the other part he takes it home, he provides gold and gilds it, and makes it fit to be ſet on a Princes Table; all the gilding was from the Potter, it was the Potter that made the difference betwixt that piece and the other bit lying in the gutter; therefore ye find him ſo earneſt, preſſing our conſent to the Covenant in the Goſpel, if that prevails not he yokes to his Spirit, and never leaves

leaves them until he bring them to purpoſes and reſolutions, and to ſubſcribe their names to the Covenant, and then he leads their hand, and helps their purpoſes and reſolutions. So he ſtands on his own ſide, for the great and precious things promiſed; and he ſtands on the Elect ſide for performing their Duties. So it may be juſtly ſaid of him, he is the Maker of the Covenant.

Fourthly, He may be ſaid to have made the Covenant, in regard the publication and revealing of the Covenant is allanerly from him, for this end hath he appointed the Scriptures to be written, and hath ordained Miniſters to Explain them, that he may reveal the Covenant; nay, all the Philoſophers, and all the Learning in the World, would never have carried a man to dream of ſuch a Covenant, without immediat Revelation from God; the Light of Nature, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, though they lead us to God as Creator, yet they do not lead us to the opening the meaning of the Covenant, the revealing of that is allanerly from him; ſo the contrivement, the Terms, the Furniture, and the Revealing of the Covenant is from him.

And *Laſtly*, The fixed perpetuity of the Covenant is alſo from him, ordinarly according to the nature of the perſons, ſo are their Covenants, careleſs perſons, their particular intereſt will eaſily make them break their Covenant, variable and changeable perſons; but an Eternal God, and an Eternal Covenant, the perpetuity of it is from him, he hath ſecured it ſo, as though we break to him, yet the Covenant remaineth firm, *Jer.* 3. *Thou haſt played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, for I am married to you*: Harlotry divorces by the Law of God, which provides that in caſe of Adultery the man and the wife ſhould be Divorced, and the Marriage-bond comes to be looſed by Adultery. All theſe five evidence that the Covenant is made by him, & really, it adds a reliſh to it, that he contrived it, and that he drew the Terms; both on his own and our ſide, that the Furniture, the Revelation of it, and Stability of it is from him.

Now in reference to the Covenant, that all theſe are made by him, will appear by theſe two remarkable Grounds. 1. This Covenant could neither have been made by men, nor Angels, therefore it was made allaner-

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ly by God. 1. It could not have been made by men, for we are but of yesterday, and the Covenant is everlasting; when this Covenant was made, Man was lapsed and fallen, it could not have entred into his heart, to think that God should give his only Son for him, and make a Covenant of Grace with him on that score; it was undoubtedly a surprisal to *Adam*, and many Divines think, he understood it not at first what that meant, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*, it was revealed to him in a dark mysterious Type and promise of the Messiah; all the course that he took when he was fallen, was to run away from God: and hide himself, and to go and sew Fig-tree-leaves together to cover his nakedness, he was far from dreaming of making an everlasting Covenant with him. Neither 2. Could this Covenant have been contrived by Angels, they are brought in, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. And doing it to this day, looking into this Mystery, which things *the angels desire to look into*, they are excellent creatures indeed, and perfect in Wisdom, and Righteousness and Holiness, but their Knowledge is not able to fathom the height, the length, the breadth, and depth of the Covenant, no, had the Angels been the Arbiters (for as excellent creatures as they are) of our distance after the fall, it was beyond the reach of their capacity to dream of such a Covenant, therefore when they heard of it, and when it was revealed to them, *they pry into it, and looked into it*, and were astonished at such a contrivement of a Covenant of Grace, so it was above the reach of Angels; and poor Man could not do it, for he could do nothing when he fell but run away and hide himself, and scarce knew what the first promise of the Covenant was, *the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*.

Secondly, That this Covenant was made by God, (and I like the notion well) will appear from this, that there are three designs, that wise and good men have in the driving their business in the world, and the wisdom that is given to them, makes them drive these three designs, and ye will find, the Father driving all the three, in making the Covenant, which evidences, that its an act suiting his infinit Wisdom, and that there is but some resemblance among men of this Wisdom. 1. Several times men design the exalting of their children. 2. The magnifying

nifying of themſelves. 3. If they be good, the advantage of others. And there runs a deſign in the Covenant, ſuiting infinit Wiſdom, in reference to all theſe three. 1. Like a wiſe Father, the deſign of the Covenant is, the exalting of his Son, he intends indeed to have his Son great, From whom could the Covenant come, that tends ſo much to exalt Chriſt, but from Chriſt's Father? it looks like the deſign of a Father, the ſcope of the Covenant, the accompliſhment of it tends ſo much to the exalting of his Son, all the blood that runs in the Veins of the Covenant, ſeems all to drive at the exalting of him, he is the Mediator of the Covenant, the Surety of it, all the Promiſes of it, are the accompliſhment of his three Offices; any that will obſerve the ſcope of the Covenant, the exalting of the Son, may well conclude, it was the Father of the Son, that made it. 2. The Father in his infinit Wiſdom, deſigned the exalting of himſelf; I deny not but he might have been exalted in his Juſtice, and have taken other methods, and ways, and meaſures, than by making a Covenant of Grace, as he might have been exalted in his Power, Wiſdom, and Juſtice, if he had taken *Noah* to Heaven, when he drowned the old World, and then made another World; but the great thing wherein men are moſt exalted is, Goodneſs and Grace; we read of ſome that have Ruled Tyrannically, and when they were dying, they have been like a Candle put out, that leaves an ill ſmell behind it; there is nothing better than to be exalted in Goodneſs and Grace, and there is no better way to do it, than that man ſhould fall, and that he ſhould give his Son to die for him, and to make a Covenant with him, that he ſhall give him Peace with himſelf, and an Heaven for all Eternity: So it looks like a Covenant made by him. 3. God being a communicative Good, Good in himſelf, its impoſſible for him not to communicat Good to others, as impoſſible as it is for the Sun, which is Light in it ſelf, not to communicat Light; therefore when God made the World he behoved to make man, that he might cummunicat the good of the World to him, he being a cummunicative Good, his nature carries him to do good to others, and the Covenant is ſo ordered, that there is no good that man can be capable of, but it is promiſed in the Covenant. Now all

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ly by God. 1. It could not have been made by men, for we are but of yeſterday, and the Covenant is everlaſting; when this Covenant was made, Man was lapſed and fallen, it could not have entred into his heart, to think that God ſhould give his only Son for him, and make a Covenant of Grace with him on that ſcore; it was undoubtedly a ſurpriſal to *Adam*, and many Divines think, he underſtood it not at firſt what that meant, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent*, it was revealed to him in a dark myſterious Type and promiſe of the Meſſiah; all the courſe that he took when he was fallen, was to run away from God: and hide himſelf, and to go and ſew Fig-tree-leaves together to cover his nakedneſs, he was far from dreaming of making an everlaſting Covenant with him. Neither 2. Could this Covenant have been contrived by Angels, they are brought in. 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. And doing it to this day, looking into this Myſtery, which things *the angels deſire to look into*, they are excellent creatures indeed, and perfect in Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, but their Knowledge is not able to fathom the height, the length, the breadth, and depth of the Covenant, no, had the Angels been the Arbiters (for as excellent creatures as they are) of our diſtance after the fall, it was beyond the reach of their capacity to dream of ſuch a Covenant, therefore when they heard of it, and when it was revealed to them, *they pry into it, and looked into it*, and were aſtoniſhed at ſuch a contrivement of a Covenant of Grace, ſo it was above the reach of Angels; and poor Man could not do it, for he could do nothing when he fell but run away and hide himſelf, and ſcarce knew what the firſt promiſe of the Covenant was, *the ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the head of the ſerpent.*

Secondly, That this Covenant was made by God, (and I like the notion well) will appear from this, that there are three deſigns, that wiſe and good men have in the driving their buſineſs in the world, and the wiſdom that is given to them, makes them drive theſe three deſigns, and ye will find, the Father driving all the three, in making the Covenant, which evidences, that its an act ſuiting his infinit Wiſdom, and that there is but ſome reſemblance among men of this Wiſdom. 1. Several times men deſign the exalting of their children. 2. The magnifying

nifying of themſelves. 3. If they be good, the advantage of others. And there runs a deſign in the Covenant, ſuiting infinit Wiſdom, in reference to all theſe three. 1. Like a wiſe Father, the deſign of the Covenant is, the exalting of his Son, he intends indeed to have his Son great, From whom could the Covenant come, that tends ſo much to exalt Chriſt, but from Chriſt's Father? it looks like the deſign of a Father, the ſcope of the Covenant, the accompliſhment of it tends ſo much to the exalting of his Son, all the blood that runs in the Veins of the Covenant, ſeems all to drive at the exalting of him, he is the Mediator of the Covenant, the Surety of it, all the Promiſes of it, are the accompliſhment of his three Offices; any that will obſerve the ſcope of the Covenant, the exalting of the Son, may well conclude, it was the Father of the Son, that made it. 2. The Father in his infinit Wiſdom, deſigned the exalting of himſelf; I deny not but he might have been exalted in his Juſtice, and have taken other methods, and ways, and meaſures, than by making a Covenant of Grace, as he might have been exalted in his Power, Wiſdom, and Juſtice, if he had taken *Noah* to Heaven, when he drowned the old World, and then made another World; but the great thing wherein men are moſt exalted is, Goodneſs and Grace; we read of ſome that have Ruled Tyrannically, and when they were dying, they have been like a Candle put out, that leaves an ill ſmell behind it; there is nothing better than to be exalted in Goodneſs and Grace, and there is no better way to do it, than that man ſhould fall, and that he ſhould give his Son to die for him, and to make a Covenant with him, that he ſhall give him Peace with himſelf, and an Heaven for all Eternity: So it looks like a Covenant made by him. 3. God being a communicative Good, Good in himſelf, its impoſſible for him not to communicat Good to others, as impoſſible as it is for the Sun, which is Light in it ſelf, not to communicat Light; therefore when God made the World he behoved to make man, that he might cummunicat the good of the World to him, he being a cummunicative Good, his nature carries him to do good to others, and the Covenant is ſo ordered, that there is no good that man can be capable of, but it is promiſed in the Covenant. Now all theſe

theſe three declare that it was he that made the Covenant; becauſe it tends ſo much to the exalting of his Son, his Goodneſs and Grace, and his being a communicative God; I will not dwell more on this.

Uſe. I will only ſay ſome few things by way of uſe, that I may come to ſpeak of the Parties. *The Lord hath made with me,* ye ſee the nature of it, there are many practical Improvements of it, that I cannot now dwell on; Only here 1. How humble men ought to be, the greateſt ground of boaſting we have in the World, is the *Covenant,* but alas we had no hand in it, nor yet the Angels they could not have contrived it, and we are very far from it: O! but Chriſtians, whoſe greateſt Charter in all their Cheſt is this *everlaſting Covenant,* we ought to be walking very humbly on this account, for we contribute not ſo much as a deſire unto it, not only did we not merit, or was there any alluring motive, but there was not ſo much as a Prayer for it, or did we ſpend a Tear for it, or had a ſigh or a groan for it; *but the Lord hath made with me,* he contrived it, and drew all the Articles of it, go therefore humbly, and walk as one that in the thing wherein thou has the greateſt ground of joy that ever thou had, yet had no hand in the contrivement of the *Covenant.* 2. It puts you to admire the unſearchable riches of his grace; will ye but ſometimes take a view of your caſe when *Adam* fell, and run away amongſt the Thickets to hide himſelf, and he and his poſterity were forefeited; Take a view of what ye have deſerved by that fall, if the thing that ye can tell of your ſelves were written on your Forehead, ye would be forced to go to ſome corner, like an Owl, to flee to the deſart and hide your ſelves; But O the breadth, the length, the depth and the height of this Grace, that God will contrive the Covenant, and draw the Terms of it, and ſtand on both ſides of the Covenant, both on our part of the Covenant, and his part, and Redeem us; go home and fall down before him, and exalt him, that ever he condeſcended to make the Covenant; What would have been our lot, or whither would we have turned our ſelves, or whither would we have fled, or left our Glory, if we had not this Covenant to run to? Therefore go, and admire and praiſe him; Its a notable frame of Spirit, when

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things revealed in publick, carries persons to a corner, with some suitable thoughts of what they heard; and indeed we should carry our Duties in Privat, suitable to our Duties in publick: Praise him, who in such a desperat case, was content to make an Everlasting Covenant with thee. 3. Here is great ground of encouragement to you that are not yet brought under the bond of the Covenant, He that made the Covenant, and brought persons under it, he chused whom he will, he chused a *Jacob* and not an *Esau*, a *Peter* and not a *Judas*, *Judas* he had not done so much ill as *Paul* had done before his conversion, *Judas* was preaching Christ, and was casting out Devils, and was in Christ's company, yet *Judas* was left to betray him; *Paul* was persecuting and blaspheming Christ, and making havock of the Church, and yet an Elect Vessel, to lift up his Name amongst the Gentiles; therefore all of you that are without the Covenant, since he made it with a *Paul*, and not with a *Judas*, with a *Jacob*, and not with an *Esau*, and yet *Esau* was the elder Brother, on this account keep your hope, and go to him, and press him to bring you under the bond of the Covenant, for what brought in *Jacob*, a *Paul*, a *Peter*, into the Covenant, but his own Grace? *Lastly*, was it he that was the Author and Maker of the Covenant? Then behold, amongst all the things that ever he did, since he created the World, its the thing that contributes most to exalt him, it was a great Word for him to say, *Let there be light, and it was light*, and for him *to stretch out the Heavens and the Earth*, and to make an Earth, as it were to hang on no foundation, and the circumference of the heaven above it, all these were great Declarations of the Greatness and Power of God, but all of these may stoop to this, that he has made a Covenant of Grace, who in one Person is both God and Man, and on the foundation of this Mystery, hath founded so many Duties, and great Priviledges, that if himself had not revealed them, they would appear the greatest fancies in the World, and they that do not believe what he hath revealed, counts them all Phanaticks that credits them; but here is the greatest demonstration of Grace that ever he gave, that he hath *ordered a Covenant*, and contrived it, and made it so secure, that no breach on our

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part ſhall break the Covenant, and he is bound for our part of the Covenant, as well as his own, and he in engaged for our conſent, and when we come to ſubſcribe the Covenant, He will lead our hand; Can any imagine ſuch a Declaration of Grace? O! be ye aſtoniſhed, O ye Heavens, at the length, and breadth, and depth of this Grace, and Power, and Love.

But I will cloſe all, with ſaying three things about his making the Covenant. 1. If there had any advantage redounded to him by making the Covenant, it had not been ſo ſtrange, I confeſs there is a Declarative Glory; like a man that comes to ſuch a ſpring of Water, and then he commends it, but he infuſes no new quality into the Well; all that we can do, adds nothing to his Eſſential Glory: now its ſtrange that he ſhould make ſuch a Covenant, and that all the advantage ſhould redound to us and not to him, except what is Declarative. 2. The damned Angels they had many grounds to have Pleaded a Covenant with him, rather than we, they were more noble Creatures, and whatever was their ſin, it is generally thought to be pride, though it be difficult for us to determine, for they aſpired to be as God, ſo we are guilty of the ſame ſin, the Serpent tempted *Eve* to eat the Apple, and be like God, and ſo we were guilty of the ſame ſin, the Angels were guilty of. Now, that he ſhould make a Covenant with thee, and not with them, is ſtrange. 3. The foundation of this Covenant, (and there was no other poſſibility of making it, in the ſtrain it runs on) it was to be laid in the Blood of his Son; O! how many ways would man have taken to have ſhifted the bargain, if the bargain could have ſtood no other way, but on the Blood of their Children; yea though the advantage was all to be ours, and we were as ill deſerving as the Devils, and that he ſaw there could not be ſuch a bargain driven, for our pardon, our peace, and our Heaven, but it behoved to be laid on the Blood of his Son; yet he drew the Covenant, contrived it, as it is this day. O! ye ſhould pray, that ye may be able to comprehend the height, the length, the breadth, and depth of ſuch a Covenant.

SERMON

SERMON. X.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my Desire, although he make it not to grow.

WE were neither the Contrivers, nor the Treaters of the Covenant of Grace, the Lord made it, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*; I shall say no more of his making of it, since it is so evident, that neither Men or Angels had no hand in it; And since it savours of infinit Wisdom, we may very rationally ascribe it to the Lord: The word *Jehovah* is one of the greatest Names he hath, which fitly comes in here, when *David* is to speak of the Covenant; *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant.* To say no more then of his being the Author, Contriver, and Orderer of the Covenant; I come to speak of the Parties that enter in this Covenant, *The Lord hath made with me*; In the handling of this, I shall consider the Persons, first something more generally, and then I shall consider them more particularly and personally, readily I will dwell some Sermons on this branch of the Verse.

First, The general Consideration of this, I will not dwell on it, I have spoken several things when I entered on the Verse, of the Lords condescendency to make a Covenant with the Elect, only I would have you notice four things about it. 1. The name *Lord*, it is here not to be taken Personally, but Essentially, as including all the three Persons of the Trinity, so that in effect, in making the everlasting Covenant, all the Persons in the Trinity became our Covenanted Parties, each of them having their distinct Work in fulfilling the Covenant; the Father hath his Work, the Son hath his, and the Spirit hath his Work; and the truth is, when we Covenant with God, so far as we can reach, there ought to be a distinct eye had to each Person of the Trinity, who though they be One in Essence, yet there are

three diſtinct Perſons. Mr. *Durham* in his Treatiſe on the Revelation makes a Queſtion, which I will not determine, whether in Prayer *a Chriſtian be obliged to eye diſtinctly every Perſon of the Trinity?* But ſure I am, in Covenanting with God, ſince we find diſtinct actings aſcribed to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Covenant there is great need, to eye the ſeveral Bleſſed Perſons of the Bleſſed Trinity, the Name *Jehovah* is common to Them all, ſo that in effect, *David*'s Party with whom he Covenanted, when this everlaſting Covenant was made, it was not the Father, or the Son perſonally conſidered, but all the Perſons of the Bleſſed Trinity, each of them in the Covenant; as they have their diſtinct Work and Operations, in bringing the Elect to Glory; ſo they all become Debtors to their own Faithfulneſs, for accompliſhing the things of the Covenant, which they made with *David*. 2. Take notice, that this taking up of God eſſentially, the *Lord* or *Jehovah*, there is implyed, as ordinarly the Name is uſed by the word *Jah*, as *Pſal.* 68. 4. *Extol him that rides on the Heavens by his name Jah*, which is a Compend of the name *Jehovah*, and is retained in our *Engliſh* Tranſlation, the taking him up under this name *Jehovah*, holds him out, as not only Faithful and True to his Promiſe in the Covenant, but as abundantly able to accompliſh his Promiſe in the Covenant. It is very pleaſant to conſider the Parties that made the Covenant, all the three Perſons of the Bleſſed Trinity, holden out under the Name *Jehovah*, thou that hangs by the Promiſe in the Covenant, why goeſt thou with thy hands on thy loins conſtantly moving diſcouraging Queſtions, and ſaying, *One day or another I ſhall fall by the hand of Saul*, Is not the Party *Covenanting Jehovah?* Is he not known to thee by the name *Jehovah?* He was not ſo known by the Tribes of *Iſrael*: It is remarkable in the beginning of the Belief, the firſt Article of it, *I believe in God the Father Almighty*; He is not like a Father, *If his child ask bread of him, he will give him a ſtone*; for he is a Father that will not beguile you; but many Fathers are not willing, nor able though they be willing; but he is both able and willing to help, he is *Almighty*; It is a remarkable beginning of the Commands, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, and out of the houſe of bondage*; I am the Lord God, I am *Jehovah*, the taking him up thus as *Jehovah*, is a neceſ-

ſary conſideration; *David* made many Covenants with Princes that were about him, and he made many Covenants with his Subjects, but he never made one like this, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*. But 2. The taking him up under this name the *Lord*, and conſidering this *Covenant* in the general, it is indeed aſtoniſhing, that he ſhould have made a *Covenant* with men; Take but a view of theſe three or four things, ye will find, that *the Lord and me*, to come under a *Covenant* together, is exceeding ſtrange.

Firſt, Conſider that he is the God that gave Man (who was lately nothing) a Being, O! they are words of wonder, that he comforts his Church in a ſad caſe with, by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Thy Maker is thy Husband, and yet our Maker*, to make us, and then to marry us, is it not wonderful? And that is imported in, *The Lord hath made with me*.

2. If ye conſider, that by vertue of his creating, he had a Right of Dominion; he needed no more but Command, and Threaten, for he being our Maker, and Preſerver, he needed no more. he had a Right to Command and Threaten; he needed ſay no more, *but do not eat of the tree, for in the day thou eats thou ſhall die*, as he did with the firſt *Adam*; but that he ſhould lay by his Dominion, and come as we were equals, and treat a *Covenant*, nay when it was treated, the Perſon that repreſented us, was his Equal, he was the Man that was his *Fellow*, *and thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, *Phil.* 2. Now that he ſhould treat a *Covenant* with us, as *Abraham* did with *Abimelech*, how ſtrange was this ſince the Parties were not equal? 3. Had it been a *Covenant* of Works he had treated, it had ſuited ſome way to a Command and Threatning; but to treat ſuch a *Covenant*, the Lord *Jehovah* with us, is wonderful; Who of us would take a Dog, or a Worm, and Indenture with it, to give it our own Bed, and in a manner prefer it to our own Children? The truth is, he ſeemed to do this, when, *that we might be healed, he laid the ſtripes on him, he was made a curſe, that we might be made Righteous; he was made ſin that we might be holy*. But *Laſtly*, This *Covenant* was made with lapſed Man; he could not promiſe to himſelf from us, the thing he could promiſe from *Adam*; for however *Adam* was under a poſſibility of falling, yet that was all, it ſeemed very improbable, that ſo light a Temptation

would make him break the *Covenant* that he had made with God, *but the imaginations of our hearts are evil continually*; it is since he made that *Covenant*, frequently the complaint is, *I am preſſed under with their iniquities, as a cart is preſſed under with ſheaves.* And *I am broken with their whoriſh hearts*: So conſider his being our Maſter, and conſider the Dominion he had on that account; and conſider that the *Covenant* is made with lapſed man, and that it is a *Covenant* of Grace; it is in effect one of the greateſt Wonders in the Bible, *The Lord hath made with me*, &c. O! learn to admire the condeſcendency of Grace, it is a wonder that we are not oftner telling it to others, and that we ſpend no more time when we meet in diſcourſing of it; But this General I will not inſiſt upon.

I will conſider this Tranſaction of the *Covenant* perſonally, more particularly it is remarkable, *David* doth not ſay, he made with the Elect, whereof I am one; or he made with the Church, whereof I am a Member, but the Lord hath made with me an everlaſting *Covenant*; he takes it and applyes it perſonally to himſelf. I had long time a deſign to ſpeak to this Head of perſonal *Covenanting* with God; I judge it one of the great Duties of the Goſpel, and that which will contribute as much to lay a reſtraint on ſin, and to excite to Duties, as any mean that a Chriſtian can follow; therefore I intend to dwell ſome Sermons on it, I ſhall make ſome entery on it now, and ſhall take this Propoſition to be handled.

Doctrine 1. That *though the Covenant of Grace be generally made with the Mediator, and with the Elect, yet every Believer ſhould make it perſonally*; they ſhould be at, *the Lord made with me*: It is remarkable, when God firſt entered in this everlaſting Covenant, he indeed publiſhed it generally to all the ſeed of the Woman, that is, to all the Elect, who were comprehended under the Mediator, who was the ſeed of the Woman, & not of the Man; yet afterwards ye find it is perſonally made with *Abraham*, *Pſalm* 105. it is ſworn to *Abraham*, and confirmed to *Iſaac* with an Oath, and afterward it is particularly confirmed to *Jacob*, and here it is renewed to *David*, it is indeed a general Covenant made with the Mediator, for all his Members, yet often ye find God treating it with *Abraham*; and again, it is not enough it be made with *Abraham*, but he muſt treat it with *Iſaac*

Isaac, and confirm it with an Oath, and over again, he must treat it with *Jacob*, importing, he must not only make it with the Fathers, but with their Children: There are many that he hath made a Covenant with their Father and Mother; but they are not in it themselves; they can say, the Lord hath made an everlasting Covenant, but they cannot say, the Lord hath made *with me*, therefore the Lord will manage this Covenant, first with *Abraham*, and afterward he will treat it personally with *Isaac*, and confirm it with an Oath, and renew it again with *Jacob*.

But to follow this Head of Personal Covenanting with God, I would have you notice this Caution in the beginning of it.

Caution, *That the Covenant of Grace is but one Covenant, the same Covenant for substance, that God made with* Abraham, Isaac, *and* Jacob: We must not think there are as many distinct Covenants, as there are distinct Persons, that enters in that Covenant; There is but one Sun, and every one may have enough of light from that one Sun, and a Ray of that Sun comes in at his own Window, if he cast open a Broad of his Window, though it be the common Sun, that serves all the Kingdoms of the Earth; So, it is the same general Covenant made with the Mediator, every particular Person is to open his Window broad, and let in a suitable Ray of that Covenant to his Case, and particularly and personally apply it to himself. We are not to think, as *Arminians* say, That God hath made a general Covenant with all the Elect; but for particular Persons, he hath left a blank to be filled up, when they believe and repent; they say this same of Redemption, they make general Acts of Grace to be conditionally accomplished; Especially, if they believe the Lord, when he indented the everlasting Covenant, he set down, not only *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*'s name, but thy name, if thou wilt consent; So we are not to think, that there are as many Covenants as there are distinct Persons; it is one general Covenant, like as it is one Sun that affords light to all the World, yet every Believer and Elect, is personally to Indent for himself, and to apply the Covenant, and to apply the Promises on the Fathers part, but he hath bound himself to the Duties of the Covenant on his part.

And in the General, this Personal Covenanting takes in

three things; I confess the third of them is not a proper Act of Covenanting, yet it is necessary to the making of it up. (1.) A person in making this Covenant, is either saying or subscribing, as *Isaiah*'s word is, *One shall say, and another shall subscribe himself to the Lord*; Whatever be the way of it, sometime one will do it with saying, sometime one will do it by subscribing, or sometime one will do it with lifting up their hand to God, that the Solemnity may be the greater; In their Indenturing in this Personal Covenant with God, the Tenor of what they do is, I accept this Christ on these Terms he offers me Wine, Milk, Honey, without Money, and without Price; He offers me fine Gold, I accept of the offer, and give my consent, I will either write it down, or give it under my hand, I will say it, or I will do it, by lifting up of my hand to the Lord. (2.) The Person that thus Personally Covenants, or that is about to draw the general Covenant of Grace to his Case, subscribes to the Duties of the Covenant, particularly to give himself to the Lord, *One shall say, and another subscribe with his hand, I am the Lords*: It is remarkable, since God in the Covenant gives himself to us, he will accept of nothing from us but our selves again: When we subscribe to give our selves to the Lord, we subscribe to this, Lord, dispose of me as thou wilt, cross me or humble me as thou wilt, for I give it under my hand, that I am at thy disposing; It is true, we bind to all the Duties of the Covenant, likewise I deny not, but a Person may find their temptations miscarry them, in reference to some sins; Some are led away with ill company, and made to swear, some are tempted to drunkenness; I deny not but they may either Covenant with God, or particularly bind against that, wherein their greatest temptations and weaknesses lyes; If Persons find themselves negligent in Prayer, or that the least wag of their neighbours coming, will call them from their Duty to God, though they are in the *Covenant*, to bind to all the Duties of the *Covenant*, yet we are particularly to bind where our temptations are greatest, and where our weakness is greatest: Personal Covenanting with God, ought to run most on that Head, which may prove an excellent restraint to the Soul, and an excellent hinderance to the corruption which the Heart is drawn to, with any light temptation, so this Personal Cove-

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nanting with God, when we can ſay *the Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, tho the Lord hath made the Covenant in general with Chriſt, and all the Elect, and tho he hath viſibly appeared to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and afterward, though he hath not ſo viſibly appeared to *David*, yet he hath his own way of communication, and we enter in a perſonal Covenant with him, when we go, and either with our voice, or with our hand ſubſcribe it on Paper, or with lifting up the hand ſolemnly, when we are in a ſpiritual frame in Prayer, and we do this, when we accept of the offer of the Covenant; and of the Mediator, on the terms of the Covenant; and binds our ſelves to the Duties of the Covenant, eſpecially ſuch as we are moſt negligent of, and ſooneſt led away from: There lyes the way of perſonal Covenanting with God, eſpecially, if ye add, as a Capeſtone.

(3.) When the Soul engages to theſe two, that it caſt an eye to the Treaſurer, unto whom the Father hath committed the bearing of the Purſe: The truth is, our Covenanting with him, is like *Delilah's* binding *Sampſon* with cords, ſo long as ſhe cuts not his locks, his ſtrength remains, but when his locks are cut, he is weak. When we caſt an eye to the Treaſurer in our Covenanting, we are ſtrong; but when we eye him not, we are weak: It's ſuppoſed *Adam* when he was perfect, ſtood not above five hours, and what can lapſed man do? Therefore the Covenant takes in the accepting of the offer, and binding to the duties, but both to be done through the Mediator, and if this be neglected, it is not right covenanting; And I believe it lyes at the root of much of our covenanting, and many have challenges in their covenanting with God, that they have not eyed the Mediator, and gone to the Fountain and Treaſurer, out of which their ſtrength both for accepting and binding muſt come.

Queſt. But ye will ſay, I have opened in this Covenant perſonal and particular Covenanting, but what if God make not a Covenant with me, or if I make a Covenant with him, how ſhal I know if he makes a Covenant with me?

Anſw. For Anſwer to this, I ſhal onlie ſay theſe two things. (1) God in making perſonal Covenants with men

men, had verie different ways of communication of himſelf; when he made the Covenant with *Abraham* he ſpake with him face to face, he did ſo to *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, but he did not ſo to *David*, but he ſends a Prophet to him; it were unreaſonable he ſhould do ſo to everie bodie, there were manie Worthies under the Old Teſtament, that could ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*: and God did not come down and ſpeak face to face with them, and confer with them, and ſay this is my promiſe; it were I ſay unreaſonable he ſhould do ſo to us, for though the Covenant be not ſo ſenſible as it was to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, it may come to thee, as it did to *David*: So that we are not to expect he will take the ſame way with everie one, that he brings under the bond of the Covenant.

I will cloſe this Sermon, with exhorting you to ſtudie this perſonal covenanting with God, I indeed take it up, for the great dutie of the Goſpel; I confeſs, it's the great neglect of the generation that we live in, the generation coming may be more in the practice of it, that Maſters of Families will not take their Wives, Children and Servants, and enter in a Familie-covenant with them, and when they are in corners, would enter in a perſonal Covenant with him. I will onlie cloſe this diſcourſe of it, with naming three or four things, that I judge to be great hinderances in the way of Chriſtians perſonal covenanting with God. (1) It is a great hinderance, our miſtaking the end of the Law, the Law is a School-maſter to lead to Chriſt; and there are manie, if they come under a Law-Work, they preſentlie think they ſhould dwell on it, they cannot be perſwaded, that this drives at perſonal covenanting with him; ye will hear afterward if ever there be a time of entering in a perſonal Covenant with God, of accepting the Covenant on the terms offered, it's when we are under a work of the Law, now manie Chriſtians miſtake quite the end of the Law, they think their tears and humiliation, and Law-works they are to dwell on them, and they know not that this Law is a School-Maſter to lead them to Chriſt; the end of theſe fears is, to terrifie you to ſeek a ſhelter in the everlaſting Covenant. (2) It hinders manie to enter in this Covenant perſonallie, they

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are exceedinglie afraid, that their guilt be greater, if they break; I confeſs it's juſtlie to be feared, but that ſame Argument ſhould hinder thee from being Baptized, and from going to the *Sacrament* of the Supper, wherein thou renews a Covenant with him; the ſame Argument that hinders thee from Covenanting with God, hinders thee from theſe two; but would ye think it a good arguing, if a man were like to drown in a Well, and one let down a Rope to him, and bid him take hold of the Rope, and it will bring him up; if he ſhould argue, I dare not take hold of the Rope for fear when I am near up the Rope break, and my fall be the greater? But I ſay unleſs thou enter in a perſonal Covenant with God, and accept of the Covenant of Grace, and apply it to thy Caſe, thou art arguing, as the Man in the Well, that will not take hold of the Rope for fear when I am near up I get the worſe fall. (3) It hinders ſome from covenanting with God, they would have ſome Arles in their hand, before they truſt him: Saith one, I would Covenant with him perſonallie, if he would give me a fill of Senſe, and would take me to the Banqueting-houſe, and caſt his Banner over me, and give that ſoul-delight that he gives to ſome; but they do not remember, it's a reflection on him, not to truſt him, without ſomething in hand. Take heed to this Covenant, and hang upon his promiſe, and if thou ſhould never be able to ſing, the Lord hath filled my hand with ſenſe all my life, thou has a nobler ſong to ſing, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant.* (4) It hinders ſome from making a perſonal Covenant, they are afraid to lay Bonds and tyes on them, and take away their mirth: O! it were a mercie if ſome of our profane young ones, that are filling the Town with profanity, and their Parents taking no notice of them, the moſt part of them begging the moſt half of the day, and profaning the Name of God the other, if they could be brought thus to Covenant with God; But many think that a great tye and a burden, that they ſhould be more in ſpeaking of Chriſt when they were in companie, and may be thou can be in many companies, and never a word of him; or thou can mock at Prayer and Godlineſs and may be it not challenge thee, but

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thou art afraid that perſonal Covenanting bring a burden on thee. I will Anſwer all theſe when I go thorow the point; I will ſay this of it, thou muſt either accept perſonallie of the Covenant, on the terms that it's offered, and engage perſonallie to the terms on which it's made, or then thou ſhalt never have any benefit by it. O! what a mercy were it, if when we come under ſome ſtrait, ſome ſickneſs, or when we get any looſing of heart at a Communion, nay, when we come under deſertion, the renewing of a Covenant may be the way to an out-gate. It's remarkable, when Chriſt was hanging on the Croſs, and the great cloud of his Fathers wrath hanging over his head, in a manner, he renews the Covenant with him, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* If thou fall in any groſs ſin, go and renew the Covenant; if he command ſome ſignal ſtroke to attend thee, renew the Covenant. The great objection is, it's a ſore matter to be ay binding, and ay breaking, and this is thy caſe readily; I confeſs it's a dreadful caſe, to be ay binding, and ay breaking; yet notwithſtanding of all thy breaches, if thou wilt yet go and ſay, and ſubſcribe with thy hand, to be the Lords, and to be more to his praiſe; if thou be a neglecter of Chriſtian fellowſhip, that thou ſhal ſpeir it out, ſpeir where thou ſhalt get ſome to pray with, and put in that in the perſonal Covenant; if thou be negligent in Prayer, to lift up thy hand to be ſo no more: all former breaks will be all paſt, if thou can ſay with full purpoſe of heart, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant.*

SERMON XI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

HAving ſpoken of the nature of *David*'s ſecurity, I came the laſt Sabbath to ſpeak of the Parties tranſacting in this Covenant, *The Lord and me*, I propoſed

poſed four things to be noticed; *Firſt* The Author of the Covenant, *Secondly*, The Parties with whom the Covenant is made, and told you that the word *Jehovah*, is to be taken eſſentially as including all the Perſons of the Trinitie, who are all Parties in the Covenant, and each of them has their particular work in the accompliſhing of the Covenant. But paſſing what was ſpoken, I come to that which I propoſed to dwell on this day, the particular Application of the Covenant indivi[illegible]llie and perſonallie to *David*: It's no, the Lor[illegible] made with *Abraham*, nor with the Elect, but *The Lo[illegible]th made with me an everlaſting Covenant*.

That which I ſhal dwell on this day, ſhal be this Propoſition, which nativelie ariſes from this Scripture.

Doctrine, That *however the Covenant externally and viſibly be made with the whole viſible Church, and really with the Mediator, and through him with all the Elect, yet every Believer ought perſonally, and particularly to Indenture in this Covenant and apply it.*

It is true, the Covenant is offered to be Tranſacted with all the Members of the viſible Church, and really with all the Elect; yet every Believer, who would ſecure his intereſt in the contents and clauſes of the Covenant, is to indenture perſonally, and particularly apply the Covenant to himſelf as if it were made with them. This Truth hath a great deal of oppoſition in the World, *Arminians*, and *Antinomians*, who though they unite not in many things, they unite in oppoſition of this Truth, they deny perſonal and particular Covenanting with God; the generalitie of *Atheiſts*, and profane mockers, look on it as a fancie, perſonally to Covenant with God; and the moſt part of hypocrites in the viſible Church, ſatisfie themſelves with their Tranſactions in Baptiſm, and ſome external kind of Tranſacting at the Sacrament of the Supper, but perſonallie and reallie to indenture with God, on the Terms of the Covenant, they utterlie neglect; therefore, to follow this Truth, ſince it comes ſo directly in my way, I will inſiſt on theſe three things in following this head. 1. I ſhal labour to prove by ſome reaſons, that it is not only a warrantable, but a moſt neceſſarie Dutie, for Chriſtians to make perſonal and particular Covenants with God. 2. I ſhal open where-

wherein this perſonal and particular covenanting with him, doth conſiſt. And 3. ſhal apply it.

Firſt, That it is not only warrantable but neceſſarie perſonallie and particularlie to Covenant with God; for confirming of this, I will offer theſe five or ſex rational Conſiderations.

Firſt, We have not only Scriptural practices of it, particularly of *David*, of whom this Text ſpeaks; whom we have frequently practiſing it, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *O my ſoul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my God*, So we find *Aſaph*. Pſal. 73. 25: *It is good for me to draw near to God*; And then, *Whom have I in heaven but thee; and on the earth that I deſire beſides thee? It was in effect* a Covenant of this nature, that *Thomas* entered into when he ſaid to *Chriſt, thou art my Lord and my God*. We have not onlie practices of it, but Propheſies of it, amongſt many Propheſies about it, for clearing and confirming it, I will read two, one of them ye have, *Iſai.* 44. 5. *One ſhal ſay, I am the Lords, and another ſhal call himſelf by the name of Jacob, and another ſhal ſubſcribe with his hand to the* LORD, *and ſirname himſelf by the name of Iſrael*; Mark here, ye have one, and one and another; individually and indefinitely indenturing with God, and ye have the different way of their doing of it, one ſhal ſay, and another, ſhal ſubſcribe with his hand; ye have the ſame over again Propheſied, *Iſai.* 45. 24. *Surely ſhal one ſay, In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength, even to him ſhal men come*; here ye have theſe two Scriptural Propheſies, relating to the times of the Goſpel, wherein there ſhould be, a ſaying, and ſubſcribing with the hand, and it's no the Church in General, but *one ſhal ſay, and another ſhall ſubſcribe*, it's a particular and perſonal indenturing with God, I know not what a multitude of Scriptures I might multiplie for the confirmation of this, that it's not only warrantable, but abſolutelie neceſſarie, it is the accompliſhment of Propheſies, and an imitation of the cloud of Witneſſes, who have gone before us in it.

Secondly, The Light of Nature teaches; that in mutual Tranſactions, that paſs betwixt Parties, about buſineſs of concernment; the Tranſaction ſhould be managed Particularly and perſonallie; Natures Light teaches that *dolus verſatur in generalibus*, frequentlie this holds

holds in this caſe, where there paſſes no indenturing betwixt God and the Soul, but meerly generals; readily the aſſurance of an intereſt in any Tranſaction by the Light of Nature, it's the ſurer and clearer the more particular mention be of the Partie concerned in it; hardlie is there a very ſmall buſineſs a man will Tranſact with his neighbour, but he will be as diſtinct and particular as he can, eſpecially if he know it be a thing will be ſubject to much debate in Law; is it not ſtrange, that Nature ſhould teach men to be ſo diſtinct, and particular in their ſmalleſt concernments, and yet they reſt on generals, contrarie to the Light of Nature, in their greateſt concernments? No, that ſame Light that leads men to be perſonal and particular, and diſtinct in managing all their other affairs in order to their clearing and aſſurance, leads them up in the buſineſs of their greateſt concernment, far more to be perſonal and diſtinct.

Thirdly, All the fundamental Priviledges, are all particular and perſonal, and why ought not the Covenant to be particularly and perſonally entred into? Election is not indefinite and univerſal, as *Arminians* and *Papiſts* teach: no, its neither univerſal nor conditional, its abſolute and particular; there is a certain Number given by the Father to the Son in Redemption, ſo its no univerſal, nor indefinite, nor conditional Election; Adoption, Union with Chriſt, and all the reſt of the fundamental Priviledges, they run in this ſtream, to be particular and diſtinct, why ought not the Covenant, which as it were the Charter by which we come to be ſecured of theſe fundamental Priviledges, to be alſo perſonal and diſtinct? Why ſhould our Election, Redemption, Adoption, and Effectual Calling, each of them be particular, and perſonal; and the Covenant, which is the Charter, and great ground of our ſecurity, not be particular and diſtinct alſo.

Fourthly, On Gods part, whether we reſpect the abſolute Promiſes, or the conditional, they all point at particular Perſons; *I will take away the heart of ſtone, I will put my fear in their heart, and I will give them pardon of ſin*; whatever Promiſe be made, whether abſolute or conditional, they are not terminat, nor have their accompliſhment together

together, in the visible Church, but like Water that is to be poured in every particular Bottle; now since on the Father's part he became debtor to every individual or personal Member, taken within the Covenant, Is it not only warrantable, but absolutely necessary, that there should be a particular application, and personal taking hold of the Covenant in all these Clauses whether absolute or conditional.

Fifthly, The Duties of the Covenant are particularly and personally to be performed, there is none here can go a warfare for another, none can pay another's Debt in the Covenant, every man must give an account for himself in this Covenant, the Parent cannot do for the Child, nor the Husband for the Wife, but every man must do for himself; now since every Duty must be performed particularly and personally, Is there not an absolute necessity, that there should be an engaging and personal indenturing with God?

Lastly, The Nature of justifying Faith, which is the great condition of the Covenant, consists in a particular and personal application of the Covenant; an Historical Faith, will carry the Devils to believe that Christ loved the Elect, and gave himself for them; but justifying Faith carries a *Paul* to, *He loved me, and gave himself for me*; herein lyes the Nature of justifying Faith, its a particular application of Christ and of the Covenant, in all the Articles and Clauses of it; and there can be no right application by Faith, of the priviledges of the Covenant without becoming subject to the Duties of it, otherways, as in Marriage, we would separate what God hath joyned, we would separate the promising and commanding part of the Covenant. Now lay all these six together, and I conceive, I have laid before you, most rational Grounds, why the Duty of personal Covenanting with God, is not only warrantable, but of absolute necessity.

The second thing proposed, shall be to open, wherein this Act of personal Covenanting with God consists; some have dilated on it at a great length, and have dwelt on the preparatory Acts to it, and the things formally required in the Act it self, and there, have spoken of the Properties and Consequences of it; but I will not dwell on it at this length, yet that I may be helpful to you

you, in your perſonal Covenanting, in regard one of the great Grounds of our withering and dryneſs, reſults from the neglect of this Duty. I ſhall therefore inſiſt, in opening the Nature of it, only in ſpeaking to theſe two things, which I conceive will briefly ſum up, wherein this Act of perſonal Covenanting conſiſts, I will not go to ſpeak any thing of Gods part, either when we make or renew the Covenant with him; But all I ſhall ſay now, ſhall be ſomething of our part, when we perſonally Covenant with him. I will reduce them to theſe two Heads.

Firſt, Our perſonal Covenanting with God, conſiſts in our accepting of the offers of the Covenant, as they are made by God. 2. In our engaging to the Terms of the Covenant required by God; for the Terms muſt be the Terms that he hath made in the Covenant, we muſt not make new Terms, neither muſt we reject any of the Terms already made. I deny not, as ye ſhall hear, when I come at it, but on the account of a particular failing, a Chriſtian may be more in engaging with reſpect to one thing, than another, eſpecially where he hath failed moſt, and Conſcience doth challenge him moſt; but we are neither to make new Terms, nor reject the Terms already made, in our perſonal Covenanting with God, we muſt keep to the Terms already made and propoſed in the Covenant in all the Articles and Clauſes of it.

Firſt then, It conſiſts in the accepting of the offer of the Father, made in the Covenant: I confeſs, I like well to read the excellent Soliloquies, many have had with their own Souls in the accepting of this offer, and entering in this Covenant, ye have patterns of them ſet down; Mr. *Allan* in his *Vindiciæ Pietatis*, Mr. *Baxter* in his *Saints Reſt*; Its like theſe holy Mens Souls, when they have been Tranſacting this perſonal Covenant with God, they have been in a very elevated frame, they ſpeak part of the Language of *Canaan*; What Apoſtrophies, and what turnings to their own Soul, and what excitements and encouragements they offer to the Soul? and then cloſes with either, *I accept this Covenant, or this contrivement of the Salvation of Sinners, as it is offered*: or elſe readily, *I ſwear and ſubſcribe it with my hand*, or elſe *I lift up my hand*, Mr. *Allan* approves for ſome length of the lifting up of the hand, that the Solemnity may be the more binding

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in the acceptlng of the Covenant, and of the Terms offered in the Covenant.

But here I will offer you two things about this accepting of the Covenant, which is the first thing wherein this formal Act of personal Covenanting consists.

First, Take notice, that this acceptation, if it be done cordially, seriously, deliberately, and according to the Gospel, its a most difficult thing, its not an easie thing to bring the heart to it; I will not say this for the discouragement of any, but there are three things that makes it most difficult. 1. There is no seed of Believing naturally in man; *Naturalists* have observed, that it is a most difficult thing, to bring Creatures to act about a thing whereof they have no principle within them. How difficult is it, to Teach Philosophy or Reason to Bruits? And the great Ground of it is, they have no Seed or Principle of it within them, and this makes the accepting of the offer of the Covenant, to be a thing most difficult. 2. In the accepting of this Covenant, not only have they no seed of Believing in them, but all the Principles in man are contrair to it; Its a wonder to see how proud Man repines, to accept of an imputed Righteousness; ye will find in the Church, *Papists*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*; and I know not what a multitude of them crying down Justification by Faith alone, and mocking at the Term of an imputed Righteousness; and O! that there were not too many amongst our selves, running headlong to these Principles. 3. The difficulty of it will appear, if ye consider the opposition that it meets with in the World, in accepting this imputed Righteousness. How many oppositions did Christ himself meet with, when he was among men? It was constantly his work to be pressing this, yet when he came to his own, even amongst the *Jews*, they required a sign, before they accepted it: and when he was preaching to the *Gentiles*, they required Arguments and Demonstrations, ere they accepted it; in effect, man having no principle within him, for accepting this Righteousness, and all the principles within him being contrair to it, and Christ himself having met with so much opposition when he preached it, yet many conclude from these that its not an easie thing to perswade a Sinner to accept of this

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Righteouſneſs of the Covenant. But I will add another thing, that this Act of accepting, its one ſpecial part of that, wherein perſonal Covenanting conſiſts; and for clearing of this, I would have you to notice three things. 1. Ye ſhall take notice, that God in the Covenant of Grace, he hath as it were paſt from the Terms of the Covenant of Works, no but he requires the ſame Duties of the Covenant of Grace: I have already evinced it to you, that the whole Law, we become bound to Obedience to it in the Covenant of Grace; yea, there are ſome Duties required in the Covenant of Grace, that are not required in the Covenant of Works; yea, he hath bound us to the whole Law, in our accepting of this Righteouſneſs; I ſay, though he hath bound us to the Law, its not the Law that is the great Condition of the Covenant of Grace; its not our Obedience that is the great Condition, its our Believing and accepting of the offered Righteouſneſs; ſo that though Obedience to the Law was the great condition of the Covenant of Works, the Tenor and Nature of the two Covenants are exceeding different, and now the great Condition, tho' the Law be required, the Law is not the Condition, its the accepting and imbracing the offered Righteouſneſs, which is neceſſary to be obſerved, in regard there are many precious to God, they deal with themſelves ordinarly, as if the Covenant of Grace run in the ſame Channel, that the Covenant of Works run in, and if they have not the ſame perfection of Obedience, and if our Sanctification have not ſuch and ſuch Qualifications, and ſuch degrees, they utterly ſentence themſelves as caſtaways; no Obedience is required in the Covenant of Grace, but the accepting of the offered Righteouſneſs, is the great Condition of the Covenant of Grace. 2. Take notice, that this accepting of the Offer, its really and formally the very Act of Believing. In perſonal Covenanting, it may be convenient, that *one ſhall ſay, and another ſubſcribe with his hand*; but the very Act of accepting is the Act of Believing; ſo the Soul tranſacts with God in this part of the perſonal Covenant, when it puts out an Act of recumbency & relying on Jeſus Chriſt, as he is holden out in the Covenant; ſo, this is the great Condition of the Covenant, and this accepting is the very

formal and proper Act of of Believing, I add 3. This accepting is the ſpecial thing in perſonal Covenanting: I deny not, but the Terms as ye ſhall hear, on which the offer is made, are neceſſary to be eyed, and readily we make but a very ſuperficial Bargain, that will make a faſhion of accepting the offer, and ſlight the Terms on which its made; but the principal Act in Covenanting is, to credit deliberatly, ſeriouſly and effectually, the Grace that makes the offer of Chriſt in the Goſpel, and to rely and caſt our ſelves abſolutely over on him. I deny not but we are to give our ſelves to the Lord, and reſign our ſelves to be diſpoſed of by him, and to be engaged to Duties, according to our ſtation: but this is not the principal part, the principal part is, to go to him, and ſay, This day, Lord I accept of Chriſt, I accept of this Righteouſneſs, that he hath purchaſed; I will rely on it, and caſt my Soul and hope of my Salvation on it. But I will not inſiſt in teaching you a form of Words, that may be uſed in accepting of the offer; but as this accepting is a difficult thing, there being no principle in man for it, but all againſt it, ſo the great condition in perſonal Covenanting is this Act of accepting.

The other thing required in making up this perſonal Covenant with God, its ingaging to the Terms on which the offer is made; we cannot go perſonally to Covenant with God, but firſt we muſt accept of the offer, and then indenture to the Terms; There are two or three Things here I thought to have ſpoken a little unto. 1. To hold out to you, that ye may be the better directed in it. ſomething of the Terms, on which the offer is made, of their reaſonableneſs and their excellency. 2. That though it be not the principal Act in perſonal Covenanting, its indiſpenſably neceſſary, and in effect there can be no perſonal Covenant, except we indenture to the Terms, and accept of the Offer on theſe Terms,

SERMON

SERMON XII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

HOw excellent ſoever the Covenant of Grace be, and excellent it is, yet the Lord hath left a liberty in the viſible Church, for every man to come and put in his name into it, *Ho, every one, and whoſoever will, let him come, and take the waters of life freely.* Without a curious inquiry into the many things pre-required, or ſubſequent unto it; I reſolved the Anſwer in two Heads: *Firſt*, The accepting of the offer of the Covenant. 2. The indenturing to the Terms of the Covenant, the accepting of the offer, is the firſt and principal part; though the Covenant require other Duties, yet they are not the proper conditions of the Covenant, and far leſs the firſt and principal condition; I ſhall ſay no more of that Branch of the Act of Covenanting, the accepting of the offer.

The other thing wherein it conſiſts is, the ſubmitting and indenturing for the Terms, on which the offer is made; and here there are two things that I would do. 1. I ſhall inquire a little, in helping to this Act of perſonal Covenanting with God. into what the Terms are. 2. What encouragement the Soul hath to indenture for theſe Terms, notwithſtanding of their number and greatneſs.

Firſt, What theſe Terms are. *Antinomians* will not admit of any conditions in the Covenant; I will not deny, but if ye examine that word *condition* properly, but they may have ſomething to ſay, but that there are Terms on which the offer is made, and which in the Souls Covenanting with God, muſt be indentured for, is beyond all controverſie; what theſe Terms are, is then worthy of inquiry; to run through them at large, would take a large time; I will only mention two things. 1.

In perſonal Covenanting with God there is ſomething we muſt give. 2*ly*. There is ſomething we muſt do; and we muſt indenture for both what we are to give and what we are to do.

First, There are ſomethings we muſt give, and what is this, what have we to give? Had we the cattel on a thouſand mountains, and gave we them, what would they ſignifie to Him? *Shall we give the fruit of our body for the ſin of our ſoul?* no we are to give Him our ſelf, indeed the indenturing on our part is mainly lying in this, to make an abſolute reſignation of our ſelves to him, as the *Macedonians*, *Paul* bare them this teſtimony, and he thought it not ſtrange, that they were charitable, for they had *given themſelves to the Lord*; the Lord in the Covenant, *He* gives Himſelf, and its the leaſt we can do, to give our ſelves back again; its a marriage Covenant, and it is not enough for the Bride, that ſhe give ſuit and preſence, but ſhe muſt give her ſelf to her Husband: It's reported in the life of *Socrates*, That one day when he was at *Athens*, ſeveral of his Schollars brought preſents to him, ſome rich preſents, ſome ſmaller; there was one poor Schollar that had nothing to give, *but* ſaid he, *I will give him my ſelf*, and *Socrates* eſteemed of that Gift more than of all that had been offered to him, its not only our Duty; but our priviledge; ſometimes a Believer may go with that argument in his mouth, when he hath any compt to make to God, *I am thine, ſave thou me*, ſo when we make a perſonal Covenant with Him, as we accept of the offer of himſelf, of his Son, his Peace, his Pardon, the Land of *Canaan*, ſo we engage to reſign our ſelves to him, and to give our ſelves to Him, which imports two things into it. 1. We give our ſelves to be diſpoſed of as to our work. 2. We give our ſelves to be diſpoſed of as to our ſtation in performing that work.

First, We give our ſelves to be diſpoſed of as to our work, though it be a Marriage Covenant, yet it partakes of a Covenant betwixt King and Subject, Maſter and Servant, its a Deſpotick Covenant, every Servant is not called to the ſame work; ſome of his Commands, ſome obſerve well, they both pleaſe Him and us, but will pleaſe our fleſh. He bids us *eat and drink*, and *our ſelves*, they are commands of the Covenant, and pleaſe both him and us; but there are many other C-

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mands, they pleaſe him, as *to take up the Croſs, to deny our ſelves*, they pleaſe him, but they are often unpleaſant to us; he may call one to preach and another to ſuffer, In the perſonal Covenant with him, we reſign and give over our ſelves, to be diſpoſed of as to our work. 2*ly*. We give over our ſelves to be diſpoſed of as to ourſtation, every veſſel in the houſe is not of gold, there are ſome of ſilver, and ſome of clay, and he that indentures in this perſonal Covenant, providing he be a veſſel for the Maſters uſe, its all one whether he be gold, ſilver, or clay, the perſonal Covenant makes a gift of our ſelves to the Lord, with an abſolut reſignation of our Lot, of our ſtation, and ſervice in the wilderneſs, if they be not a glazen window in the houſe, they are content, providing they be a nail in the wall; if they be not an eye, they are content providing they be a toe, if it be for the good of the body. Its true we are no great gift, when we have made a gift of our ſelves, yet its that he calls for, and in perſonal covenanting with him, that we indenture for, like the *Macedonians*, we give our ſelves to the Lord, to be diſpoſed by the Lord; if He think proſperity or adverſity for us, we are content; if He think a ſuffering lot, or a peaceable lot for us we are content; or whether we be in a high place, or a low place, it is all one, for its a clauſe in the Indenture, we are to be at his diſpoſing.

Secondly, In the Covenant, we not only look to what we are to give, but what we are to do, its true all the Duties of the Covenant, ought to be done; in our Covenanting with him, we are not to make exception of any of them; a Believer may perſonally Covenant with God, that does not diſtinctly take up all the Terms on which the Covenant runs, yet they do not make exception of any of the Terms, but eſteems all his commands, concerning every thing to be right, ſome of them are greater, ſome are ſmaller; even in our indenturing in the Covenant of Grace, we are not to walk by the principles that others walk by; O ſay they, the Truths relating to external Worſhip and Church Government, they are but ſmall things; the great Duty is to accept of the Righteouſneſs offered in the Covenant; they will perſonally Covenant with God, for theſe abſolute indiſpenſible and neceſſar things; but they think they need

not take in these lesser things into the Covenant; But like a man clipping gold, he will stoop down and lift the least clipping, Why? its gold; in our indenturing, we are not to make exception of any of the Terms, Why? the Terms are his, and there are two reasons for this. 1. In the great Duty of the Covenant, the Father's design is the Exaltation of his Son; it was one of the proofs I brought to prove him the Maker of the Covenant, it looked like the design of it, that he designed to cry up his Son; therefore the great violation of the Covenant lyes in unbelief, and not accepting of the Son which would be noticed by all, who will go mourning for other things and will be cherishing their unbelief: There cannot be a greater affront put upon God, than what is put upon him in his Son, in regard he is at the outmost of his offers, to speak with reverence, he cannot make a greater offer, than of his Son, now an eye ought to be had to this great Duty especially, But 2*ly*. These things wherein our infirmity is greatest, or that we are soonest worsted by Temptation, in covenanting to Terms, our Covenanting with God, a special respect ought to be had to these, as *Samson* had something wherein his great strength lay, in other things he was like another man; so every one of us hath something wherein our weakness lies; now in our covenanting with God, if one be neglecter of Family Duty, or if one be easily drawn away from God, after evil company, if one be in a passion and provoked to prophane and blaspheme the holy and precious Name of God, if one be superficial in secret Prayer; observe wherein the infirmity lies, and where the Temptation does most easily worst them, to have an eye in the personal Covenant with God to these things: its observed by some, when they write of the Covenant: when the Spirit is about to challenge, for the neglect of these things, there will nothing sooner come in ones heart, than the Covenant they made, like a knock of an hammer, it will drive in the challenge, and roove the Nail to the head; therefore, a special eye ought to be had for these infirmities incident to us, wherein Temptations use to assault us most. So I hope, laying these things together, I have proved wherein personal Covenanting with God lies, it lyes in accepting the Son, the Father hath offered him

and all that he hath, and when the Soul accepts of this offer, and relyes with an act of recumbency on the faithfulneſs of him that made it, and ſubſcribes to the Terms, both to give themſelves to the Lord back again, and to indenture to the Terms and Duties required, and particular indenturing againſt the infirmities we are eaſily beſet with, and that Temptation eaſily worſts them in; herein lies, as I conceive, the Act of perſonal Covenanting with God, eſpecially if ye add to it, in

The 2*d.* place, the manner how this Acceptation, and this Engagement is to be performed and gone about; and here I ſhall notice to you three or four things: (1.) Take notice, that in accepting this offer, and indenturing to theſe Terms, in a perſonal Covenant with God, the action ought to be very deliberat and adviſed; it ought not to be as one ſays, as a man loving a woman, at the firſt view he ſees her beautiful and comely, and preſently it goes in his heart he will marry her, not conſidering that ſhe may have much debt and an evil humour, and many infirmities following her; ſo, many in their perſonal Covenanting with Chriſt, they preſently fall in love with Glory, they fall in love with the Land of *Canaan*, and they ſee the Mediator beautiful and lovely, but they do not conſider the croſſes, the reproaches, the Temptations, the difficulties, that will accompany Covenanting with him. Its remarkable in Scripture, its called the deed of the wiſe Merchant, that goes and ſells all that he may buy the Field where the Pearl is; this is not the Act of a fool, its not an haſty act, no, he goes and conſiders the Field, and finds it is the Field where the Pearl is, and he goes and ſells all that he may buy it; ſo, the ſoul that Indentures with God on this ſcore, muſt conſider, it is a buſineſs may coſt him all that he hath, he muſt conſider, whether the Pearl will compenſe the ſelling of all that he hath; There are many, it may be truly ſaid of them, they are pound fools and peny wiſe, all the little wit they have in the Wilderneſs, is only like children, it is how to build Houſes, and run after Flies, and buſk Babies, but their deliberation runs not about this. It is ſtrange to ſee many rational in many things, and ſo far from reaſon in their Religion, the moſt thing wherein they play the fool is, there, but this Act of perſonal Covenan-

venanting, is a deliberat Act, its an Act of the wise Merchant, who considers whether the Field and the Pearl will pay the cost. (2ly.) This Act is to be an Act of the whole Soul, the understanding, will and affections, the Lord will have the consent of all, in perfecting this work of personal Covenanting; the case is with them as with some generous spirits, who in suit of Martiage, except they get the Womans heart and consent, all other things that they can offer, will be of no value, and will not induce them to Marry: Wisdoms demand is, My Son, give me thy heart, it is not, give me thy hand, or give me thy tongue or ear, but *my Son give me thy heart*; its not, my Son, divide thy heart, give me a piece of it; but, my Son, give me thy heart, its the whole heart that must be given him, in personal Covenanting with him, and when he hath gotten the whole heart, he hath not gotten a thing of much worth, unless he take away when he hath gotten it, to clothe it with the righteousness of his Son, and to Perfume it, and yet for as feckless as it is, he will have it in personal Covenanting with him, to concur. (3ly.) It may be very necessary and useful, sometimes to express outwardly our accepting of his offer, and Indenturing to these Terms on which the offer is made; it is true, the special obligation, and that which is especially required, is, the firm purpose of heart, the consent of the heart, and he will not take words, if he marry, except he know well he get the Brides heart; there may be externals subservient to the great end of personal Covenanting with him, as sometimes to go and say to God, Lord, I accept of this Christ, and Indenture on these Terms, I will give my self to thee, & will watch especially against the thing I have been neglective in, and guilty of; sometimes we may do it, by lifting up of the hand, our hearts are such cheats as we cannot lay too many Tyes on them; sometimes Believers have done it, by subscribing to the Lord, they have drawn up the special things of it on Gods part, and the special Duties they have engaged unto on Gods part, and they have written them down, and spread them before the Lord, and then subscribed them; which if they find of any use, when they have examined their wey, they have run to the Engagement they made to the Lord, and they find

find, if performing such Duties, yielding to such Temptations, be agreeable to the Covenant they made with God; therefore from the fear of the wrath of the Covenant, they have been made to mourn for Covenant breaking in with him. Now when things are thus performed, when with consent of the whole man, they are content either to say, or to subscribe, or to swear to God that they take his offer, they hold him at his offer, they take hold of the offer, as it is offered, and will not alter the Terms, but accepts of it on the very Terms it is made, this is the Act of personal covenanting with God, as I conceive.

But before I proceed to the Application, there is one great difficulty necessary to be cleared, I would remember both the grounds I brought in the Forenoon, to prove the necessity and the Explication of that, wherein the formal act of personal covenanting consists.

Quest. The question necessar to be cleared is, whether is this personal Covenant with God, the duty of all within the visible Church? Is there not a mixed multitude of Elect and Reprobat, and is not the Church like a Drag-net, wherein good and bad Fishes are, and can this personal covenanting and accepting the offer, and Indenturing to the Terms, be the duty of the reprobat and bad Fishes in the Net? This is the tossing of a great *Arminian* question, if I should dilate in the Latitude it would carry me before such a popular Auditory.

Ans. For Answer to the Question, I will only say this, this Act of personal covenanting, is the Duty of all within the visible Church, and none is to exempt himself from it, but indeed especially it is the duty of the Elect.

There are Two parts of this Answer; that I would labour to confirm to you, from some Reasons, 1. That it is the duty of all within the visible Church, thus personally to covenant with God, shall appear from these things, 1. All to whom the offer of the Covenant is made, are bound to the accepting of the offer; Now whatever be in the purpose of God, the Promulgation and Proclamation of the Covenant, and the offer of it is made to all within the visible Church, and who shall question, where there is no offer made, that it is presumption to accept of it? Many stand at it, as if it were

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preſumption; I ſuppoſe one were coming by a houſe, and if the Maſter of the houſe ſhould look out at the window, and ſee him, and intreat him to come and dine with him, and eat and drink with him, would ye think it preſumption, eſpecially if he ſhould add Allurements, and Promiſes, and tell you that he hath killed his Fatlings, and mingled his Wine, and if he ſhould not prevail with all theſe, if he ſhould look out at the window, and cry, if ye will not come in, I ſwear I will come down and kill you; the Father hath done ſo in this Covenant, he hath given Intreaties, and Allurements, and Promiſes, and ſworn, if ye accept not of his offer, he will damn you eternally in Hell. 2*ly*. All who the Command of Believing reaches, and who are concerned in it, are bound perſonally to Covenant with God, but all in the viſible Church are commanded to believe, and the great Root of the Sentence that will paſs againſt them will be, even the Reprobat, their not believing. 3*ly*. If all were not bound thus perſonally to Covenant with God, what can be the meaning of the many Regrates and Lamentations in the Goſpel, for many Reprobat ones, for their not Indenturing with him, to ſit down over *Jeruſalem* and weep, to upbraid *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, if they had not been bound thus perſonally to covenant with him: So its the duty of all within the viſible Church, all of them ly under an Obligation, to make a Covenant with him by Sacrifice, on no leſs hazard than what they are worth for ever and ever: But this is the duty of all, but eſpecially the Elect, the reaſons why it is the Elects duty, I will not dwell on them at this time, but will ſhew you, that though it be conſtantly the duty of the Elect, to be making and keeping Covenant with God, yet there are ſome ſpecial times, wherein eſpecially they are called to it, and all I ſhall ſay in this Sermon, ſhall be to ſhew you Four or Five remarkable Junctures or caſes, wherein the Lord calls his Elect, to enter in or to renew a Covenant, *Firſt*, At their firſt effectual calling, when he hath made a Law-work to make way for a Goſpel-work when He hath ſent his Spirit to convince of Sin, and of Judgment: the Spirit hath a commiſſion alſo, to convince of Righteouſneſs, then eſpecially they are called to perſonal Covenanting with God. And the truth

truth is, the work of effectual calling, the Term of it, that which perfects it, and makes it effectual Calling, its not challenges and convictions of Sin, its the closing with Christ, and entring in a personal Covenant with Him; for suppose we should be able to tell, of never so many challenges for Sin, and fears of Hell, they have had, they are not able to instruct from all these, their effectual calling, if they have not come under a personal Covenant with Christ; so any of you that are under the pangs of the new Birth, as there are some travailing among you, under fear and griefs, and guiltiness, and fears of Hell, the way of coming to a delivery, and an out-gate from all these is, to enter in this personal Covenant, to accept of the offer, and the Terms on which the offer is made. 2*ly*. It is a very suitable time to enter in this personal Covenant with God, when there comes to be a special impression of the Spirit, made on the Soul, we ought to take the stot of our hearts, readily it may be long before ye get that occasion again, its not your each days dinner, when ye get any Elevation of Spirit, any delight or any peace or joy in believing, any striking of the Irons in Prayer, that the heart will affect the eye, when we go to God, that is a special time of Personal Covenanting with Him, in this case, we are to do as *Psal.* 27. 8. *Thou saidst, Seek ye my face*, that is the Spirit working within him, it was even like a command, and my heart Answered, *Thy face Lord I will seek, hide not thy face from me*: So at your first effectual calling, it may be in some corner, ye may have some liberty to vent your heart to God, and ye may have some gale on your Spirit, ye cannot improve that time better, as a cord to knit to the Duty better than to say, I accept of the Offer, and I accept of the Terms on which it is offered, and I shall watch against the faillings wherein I have been weakest. 3*ly*. Its a suitable time to enter in a personal Covenant with God, after we have fallen in some great sin against God, after we have been left to some great sin against God, that have made a breach on the former personal Covenants, that we have made with Him; It may be some wide breach then, that comes to be a call to thee from God, to go and renew a Covenant with Him: Its remarkable in *Thomas*'s case, when Christ came in among the Disciples

ples, when *Thomas* was abſent; and they told him that Chriſt was riſen, and they had ſeen him, O ſaith he, I will not believe, except I put my hand in his ſide, and in the print of the nails; Chriſt comes and convinces him of this ſin, and challenges him for it, and bids him not be unbelieving, but faithful; and when he had ſeen him, and heard him, and had been convinced, thou art my Lord and my God ſays he, its as much as if he had ſaid, I will Indenture of new with Chriſt, and renew a perſonal Covenant with him, thou art my Lord, and my God; ſo that when there comes to be any breach betwixt God and us, that readily he hath made a great ſlap in our former vows, when ye are not to go and run away, and give over hope, but even after *Thomas* would not believe, that Chriſt was riſen from the dead, and was living, yet when he is throughly convinced of all, he ſaith, thou art my Lord, and my God. 4*ly* It is a fit time in entring in a perſonal Covenant with God, when a Chriſtian comes under deſertion, and when there is a great cloud betwixt him and God; Its remarkable, upon the croſs Chriſt complains more of Deſertion, than of the Nails that was thruſt in Him; it was no wonder, if he had taken ill with the Croſs, for he was daily with the Father, as one brought up with him, and he was daily his delight, before the mountains were brought forth; and a deſertion was heavy to him, and what is his way he takes for outgate? He takes him to the Covenant, *my God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* In this caſting a copy to us, that there is no ſuch promiſing way under Deſertion, as the renewing of a Covenant with Him. *Laſtly*, It is a fit time to enter in a perſonal Covenant with Him, at a Sealing Ordinance; the Sacrament of the Supper, its a Seal of the New Teſtament in His Blood: and it may lay a great Obligation, on a looſe careleſs heart, that if it get leave, will be thy death, as a poor man complained, *Alas! my heart will be my death*, thou that haſt ſuch a heart, thou art to enter in perſonal Covenant with him, and take this Bread and this Wine, and ſay, I accept of this Redeemer, as the Father offers Him; I indenture to the Terms of the Goſpel, without exception of any of them; but eſpecially to the great things wherein I have been moſt negligent; there is a fit time to enter

enter into this perſonal Covenant, when there is a Seal of the New Teſtament paſſing as it were out of his hand, into thine; and that is a great part of the Souls Communion with him in that Sacrament.

Uſe. I will only exhort to two things, and with them cloſe this Sermon, 1. Chriſtian wilt thou go and take a view of this Covenant, that thou may be encouraged, to engage in it; many are ignorant of the Covenant. I complain of your ignorance of the Scriptures, and of your unacquaintedneſs with them, and for all the ſweetneſs of the Promiſes, that ye know nothing of them, that ye cannot ſay, as an Antient was wont to ſay, this is my Promiſe, a Believer ought to have ſeveral Promiſes in the Covenant, theſe which they have gotten, moſt reviving, quickning, and conſolation from; what an excellent thing is it, if one were going through the Bible and through the Covenant, and doing as Apothecaries uſe to do, they go to a Garden and they get a Flower here and there, and puts them up in Boxes, that when ſick folk comes they may go right to the Boxes; ſo ought we to do with the Promiſe, we ought to gather the Promiſes in claſſes, ſo that when we have to do with any Promiſe, we may go to them and take out a Promiſe ſuitable to our caſe. 2*ly* I exhort you to take a view of the Duties, and Terms of the Covenant, ye need not be diſcouraged at them, there is a kind of Heaven in holineſs, and the ſcope of them all is, to make us holy; its true, the generality but breaks the ſhell and gets not the kernel, there is nothing more ſweet and ſatisfying than the kernel its like Honey; all that taſte of it cry, more, more, but of all the wertheſt things in the world is the ſhell.

SERMON XIII.

2 *Samuel* 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Propoſed in the ſecond Branch of this verſe three things to be conſidered. *Firſt*, Who is the Author of the Covenant? Of this I have ſpoken. *Secondly*, The Parties conſidered perſonally and particularly, and the

ſpecial

ſpecial thing I inſiſted on the laſt day was, That every Believer ought perſonally and particularly to find himſelf concerned in the Covenant; and named five or ſix grounds, to prove the warrantableneſs and neceſſity of perſon Covenanting with God. And then open that Queſtion, wherein perſonal Covenanting conſiſted: I alſo required in this Queſtion, who were bound in this Duty of perſonal Covenanting? I told you that it was the duty of all the Members of the viſible Church, but eſpecially the Elect. I ſhall now, that I may the more fully open the Duty of our perſonal and particular Covenanting, or entering in a Covenant of Grace with God, open ſome properties of this Act of perſonal indenturing and Covenanting with God, and I ſhall name theſe five or ſix of them, and from them ye will better underſtand the nature of it.

Firſt, This Act of perſonal Covenanting with God, its an abſolutly neceſſary Act, its indiſpenſibly neceſſary, that we ſhould accept his offer in the Covenant, and bind our ſelves to the Terms of the Covenant; and that is the firſt Character and Property of it. Its obſerved by Divines, there are ſome things God hath forbidden, there are ſome things God hath left indifferent, and hath neither commanded nor forbidden them, there are ſome things God has commanded, and they are neceſſary *neceſſitate præcepti*, they are to be obeyed *hic* & *nunc*, as the Sacrament of the New Teſtament is, and there are ſome things neceſſary *neceſſitate medii*, as School-men ſpeak, we cannot be ſaved without them. Now this Act of perſonal Covenanting with God, is of this nature, its of abſolute and indiſpenſible neceſſity, which will appear from the conſideration of theſe three or four things. 1. Unleſs we particularly and perſonally and expreſly accept of the Covenant of Grace, and indenture with God on the Terms of the Covenant, we cannot be ſtated in a Covenant relation with God. The Covenant made in Baptiſm by our Parents, wherein we have but virtual conſent doth not ſtate us in real Covenant with God, until we really Indenture, and with conſent Covenant with Him in the Covenant; ſo until we conſent, we muſt be under the curſe and Covenant of Works, in all the Clauſes and Heads of it, and cannot claim unto the Covenant of Grace, in all the Clauſes and Articles of it; for there cannot be a Cove-

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nant relation with God, until we expreſly, particularly, and perſonally Indenture in a perſonal Covenant with Him. 2*ly*. Until we thus particularly and perſonally Covenant, we cannot have any benefit by Chriſt's Death; whatever he hath purchaſed, (and he hath purchaſed great things) yet, until we accept and take hold of the Covenant, and particularly and perſonally Indenture in it, we can have no benefit by his Death: the Covenant is as it were the Contract, and there is no woman that has a right to the Contract, but ſhe that marries the man; until we be unite to Chriſt we can have no benefite by the Covenant; and until we enter in the Covenant, we cannot be unite to him, Epheſ. 2. 12. *At that time ye were aliens from the common wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the Covenant of promiſe*; mark how theſe two go together, *without Chriſt, and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſes* even ſo, that until we come to Indenture perſonally and particularly in the Covenant, we are without Chriſt, and without a right to the benefits of his Death. 3*ly*. Until we come perſonally, and particularly to Indenture with God, and accept of the Covenant of Grace, we can have no comfortable views of Providence, eſpecially if they be dark and humbling Providences. The Covenant is as it were a Key, that opens all Providences: its a remarkable word, Pſal. 25. 10. *All his ways are mercy and truth, to ſuch as keep his covenant*: mark here *all his ways are mercy and truth*. And how come they to be known to be Mercy and Truth? They come to be known *by our intereſt in the Covenant*, and by the Covenant it ſelf. Let him do to us what he will; let him correct, and let him do it never ſo ſharply, yet by the Covenant, and our Intereſt in it, we ſee them to be Mercy and Truth. 4*ly*. Until we thus perſonally Indenture and Covenant with God, we neither own our Baptiſm, nor can we rightly Communicat; there is a Covenant indeed made with God by our Parents in Baptiſm in whom we virtually conſent to the Covenant, in all the Clauſes and Articles of it, but this is not enough; as a man ſuiting a woman, he judges it not enough, that he have her Parents conſent, its her ſelf he muſt marry; ſo in Baptiſm, our Parents gave their conſent that we ſhall accept Chriſt on the Terms of the Covenant; but we never own our Baptiſm, until we perſonally covenant with God; neither go we rightly about the Sacrament of

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the Supper, which is a Seal of the Covenant, until we perſonally Indenture & covenant with him. *Laſly*, Until we perſonally Covenant & Indenture with God, there can be no comfortable viewing of the Great Day, the thoughts of Judgement and Eternity are terrible to them, that have not an intereſt in the Covenant: Its a remarkable word, *Pſal.* 50. The beginning whereof, the current of Interpreters refer it to the Judgment of the Great Day, in the 5. and 6. *verſe*, *Gather my Saints to me, thoſe that have made a covenant with me by ſacrifice, the heavens ſhall declare his righteouſneſs, for God is judge himſelf*: mark here that day will be a comfortable day to the Saints, and who are they that are to be gathered to him that day? Its thoſe that have made a Covenant by Sacrifice with him, and God himſelf is Judge: now lay all theſe five together, and ye will find that this particular Indenturing with Him, is of abſolute neceſſity.

But I come to a ſecond propertie of this Covenant, this Act of covenanting perſonally with God, and accepting of the Covenant of Grace, perſonally and particularly, as it is an Act of abſolute neceſſity, it ought to be a Deliberat well pondered Act, no Act ought more to be pondered: many go about this raſhly, they are like that *Scribe* that came to Chriſt in *Matth.* 8. 20. The *Scribe* ſaith, *Maſter, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt*. Chriſt tells him, *the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*; but we read no more of that *Scribe*, its as much as thou art not deliberat, thou offers to follow me whitherſoever I go, its a raſh offer, thou knows not what thou ſayeſt. This Act ought to be a very deliberat Act on theſe grounds. 1. Man is a rational Agent; Reaſon is the great ſpecifick Difference, diſtinguiſhing him from a Brute, if in any thing his Reaſon is to be exerciſed, its in his Religion: for however God hath called us to believe ſeveral things, which our Reaſon cannot comprehend, as that there ſhould be three Perſons in one Eſſence, two Natures in one Perſon, our Reaſon cannot fathom, nor dive into the deep of theſe Myſteries; yet there is nothing in our Religion contrair to Reaſon, and however we have ſuch duſty Spectacles, that we will take the thing for Reaſon the day, which we will count folly to morrow; however our

Reaſon

Reaſon ſince the Fall, hath gotten a Wound, that makes us like *Jacob*, go halting, when he is touched on the hollow of his Thigh: and yet ſo much of the exerciſe of Reaſon is left to us, as that in our Religion there is a ſpecial exerciſe for it; God calls not man in this Act of perſonal Covenanting, to deny his Reaſon, but rather to exercise it. And when a Chriſtian goes in his walk with God on well founded Reaſons, Scriptural Reaſons, and the Authority of God in the Scriptures, readily that Chriſtian is not frothie, driven like chaff before every wind of Temptation, but is ſolid in his walk. 2*ly*. This Act of perſonal Covenanting with God, ought to be deliberat, in regard of the great importance of it: Nature will teach us, that things of great importance, ought to be done with great deliberation; and hardly is there a thing of more importance, than our accepting of the Covenant of Grace, and Indenturing with the Father, on the Terms of the Covenant: many ponder not the importance of it, but its of ſo great importance, as for all Eternity, ſo long as God will be God, its of importance for us, it ought to be very deliberat, unleſs we be pound fools, and penny wiſe, who will be deliberat in Trifles, like Children buſking their Babies, and rickling up their Houſes. 2*ly*. It ought to be deliberat, in regard undeliberat Actions to God-ward, makes them ſoon evaniſh; there are ſome if they come under afflictions, or if they fall in ſickneſs, or a Fever, and God ſhake Death over their head; or if they be at ſome ſolemn Ordinances, they will be at reſolving and purpoſing, and readily bringing vows on themſelves, of perſonal Covenanting with God, but as they are eaſily gotten, ſo they eaſily evaniſh, Pſal. 78. 34. *When he ſlew them, then they ſought after him, and returned and enquired after God*; ſeveral times our affections are like a Gutter, when there is a great Showre, we will be running over with purpoſes after God, *Nevertheleſs they flattered him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongue, for their heart was not right with God, nor they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant*: and yet when he ſlew them, they ſought after him, and they early enquired after him: ſo that indeliberat Actions and covenantings with God, as they are haſtily begotten, they no leſs ſuddenly evaniſh; the Action ought then to be deliberat when we

Indenture with the Cautioner, and obliges our self to more watchfulneſs, and more tenderneſs, or elſe it will ſoon evaniſh. *Queſt.* But here I will clear a Queſtion, whereabout are we to deliberat, what is a perſon to deliberat about, when he thus Indentures with God? The *Anſwer* is obvious, and I will reduce what I will ſay of it to two Heads. 1. We are to deliberat, to conſider and ponder what Offers God makes in the Covenant. 2*ly*, On what Terms theſe Offers are made; both theſe two being by a rational Soul rationally pondered, may have great influence on a fixed Work with God, and not prove a flaſh, like what is in an hypocrite.

Firſt, We are to conſider, and deliberat on the Tenor of the Offer made by God, which we are to conſider poſitively, and comparatively. 1. Poſitively we are to conſider his Offers; The multitude of them, the greatneſs of the things he offers, ſome have laboured to reduce them to Heads, he not only makes offer of Peace and Pardon, and Happineſs in the Covenant, but to ſpeak with Reverence of the Majeſty of God, he is at the outmoſt of what he can offer: To ſay it with Reverence, it is impoſſible for him to make greater Offers. He cannot make greater Offers than of himſelf, and of his Son, and both theſe He offers in the Covenant for all Eternity. Now when we enter in a Perſonal Covenant with God, we are to ponder the Promiſes of the Covenant, that they are great and precious Promiſes: We are to conſider the multitude of things offered in it, and the greatneſs of them, that in a manner, He is at his utmoſt in his Offers, He cannot make a greater Offer. 2*ly*, We are to conſider theſe Offers comparatively; the Heart of Man hath many Wooers ſuiting it; ſometimes it hath ſomething in the World ſuiting it, ſometimes one thing, ſometimes another; but let them carry it that makes beſt Offers: Lay theſe Offers in the Ballance with what the World offers, and the Honours and Advantage of it, lay them in the Ballance with what your Luſts offer, and with what Satan offers, and let them carry the Heart who makes the greateſt Offer: The conſideration of theſe things, when one ſits down like that man, that when he came to the exerciſe of his Reaſon, he began to conſider, it is not long ſince I came to the World, and in a little I will be no more in it, and wherefore came I to it, what is my buſineſs in it? There are many things ſuiting my Heart,

and whoso makes the best and the greatest, and the surest Offer, let them carry it, such a Soliloquie betwixt Man and his Soul, acting like a rational Agent, will readily put the Soul to accept of the Offers of the Covenant, and Indenture with God.

Secondly, We are likewise to consider the Terms on which these Offers are made, and upon which we are to Indenture with God: Many will make this Bargain, as sometime a Drunkard will make a bargain in his drink, that when he is fresh, he rues it, and would steal from it again: But we are to consider the Terms, on which we enter in this Covenant, and we can never rightly enter in this Covenant with God, (and without entering in this Covenant, we cannot be saved) except we ponder the Terms on which we Indenture, and there are three things necessar to be pondered about them. 1. The multitude of them, it is true the Covenant is a Covenant of Grace, and not a Covenant of Works; and as I said, believing in Jesus and accepting of Him, is the only proper condition of the Covenant of Grace; God in the Covenant of Grace, hath bound us to all the Duties he hath commanded in the Covenant of Works, what a multitude of them there are; take a compend of them in that word, 2 Cor. 7. at the beginning, *Having these Promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*; mark there, we must cleanse our selves of the filthiness of the flesh and spirit; A famous Ancient said well, when he read that Verse, This seems to me, says he, like the Message the King of *Syria* sent to the King of *Israel*, 2 Kings 5. 2. *I have sent my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosie*; what says he, *Am I a God to kill and make alive, that this man sendeth to me to cure him of his leprosie?* 2*ly*. We are to consider, the constancy we are bound to in these Terms, if we enter in Covenant with God, it is a Marriage Covenant, whatever fall out to a Man or Woman, except Adultery, the Marriage-tye remains firm; if one were never so sickly or tender, does not break that Tye, all the variety of Cases his People can come under, cannot dissolve it, we are not to be Time-servers in these things, for in a little, them that serve Time, their Master will be taken from them, *Revel.* 10. 5. *And I saw an Angel stand upon the sea, and he lift up his hand to Heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there should*

be time no longer. But 3*ly*, We are to conſider the Difficulties that will accompany theſe Terms; the Terms are to *Cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*; What multitude of Difficulties muſt theſe Terms be carried on with? Will he make a Man walk like an Owl among the reſt of the Birds? What a deal of Croſſes and Difficulties will attend him that makes a Covenant with God? Now one that would indenture in perſonal Covenant with God, muſt conſider and ponder all theſe. Now this is the ſecond Property of Perſonal Indenturing with God, it is an Act of abſolute neceſſity, and we ought to be very deliberat and ſerious in it.

Thirdly, This Act of Perſonal Covenanting, as it ought to be deliberat, ſo it ought to be ſincere, and an Act of the whole Soul, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *O my Soul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my God.* God will diſpenſe with any Infirmity in this Act, ſooner than Hypocriſie. He cannot endure to be mocked: For clearing this, that it ought to be done with the whole Soul, I would have you notice, *Firſt*, This Act of Perſonal Covenanting, requires a very well ordered Soul, not only Morally well ordered, but Spiritually; Divines obſerve well, the Soul is well ordered in two Caſes;

Firſt, When the Will comes to be led by the Underſtanding, ſeveral times the Will like a domineering Lady, it glories in its Liberty and Freedom, it will bind the Underſtanding, and draw it after it; We are eaſily brought to believe, what the Will inclines us to, and to find out Reaſons, for juſtifying of the thing which it deſires. *Next*, The Soul is well ordered, when Underſtanding, Will and Affections follow the Conſcience, and the Conſcience is regulat by the Word of God; the Affections, often it holds true of them that is ſaid of Fire and Water, *They are good Servants but ill Maſters*; when the Affections come to dominer, they are ill Maſters, but when they are ruled by the Conſcience, and the Conſcience regulat by the Law of God, ſo that we can moderate our Anger and not ſin, that we can deſire nothing but what we lawfully deſire, and we fear nothing but what we can lawfully fear; when grief keeps within its bounds, when the Affections are thus regulat, what a ſweet calm is there in the Conſcience, like an Inſtrument that all the ſtrings of it are rightly placed, and when ye ſtrike on them, every ſtring gives the ſound they ought

to give; ſo the Underſtanding, Will and Affections when they are rightly regulat, they give the ſound that is proper for them; when the Underſtanding is thus regulat, that the Will follows the Underſtanding, and the Soul is regulat by the Conſcience, and the Conſcience by the Word of God. 2*ly*. This Soul covenanting it imports a rightly ordered frame of the Soul, for its an affectionat and ſincere Act, it is not to be wrung out of us, *Bellarmine* calumniats Proteſtants, when he ſays we maintain in the Act of Effectual calling, that *Deus torquet voluntatem*, no, he doth not thraw the Will, no, in this Act of perſonal Covenanting, it uſes to be done, when its done with the Soul, not with the Affections only, but the Benſil of the Affections; its as it were the marriage day, and in that day, the Soul is cloathed in its beſt Apparel, and the Underſtanding, Will and Affections, are at the hight of their Vigor and Fervency, its neceſſar it ſhould be ſo; for the Lord when he entered in Covenant with us, O! ſo ſincerely and affectionatly as He enters, & when he hath found the loſt Goat and ſtragling Sheep. He calls His neighbours and friends to rejoyce with him, Luk. 15. *I likewiſe ſay, there is joy in Heaven over one ſinner that repents*, &c. When he doth it ſo affectionatly, and is ſo much taken when a perſon doth perſonally covenant with Him, ought we not to Covenant ſincerely with the Benſil of the Affections.

SERMON XIV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my Houſe be not ſo with GOD; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

AMong many excellent Truths of this *verſe*, this is one, not of the meaneſt, that *David ſpeaks* of the everlaſting Covenant, as a thing perſonally and particularly made with him, he doth not ſay, the Lord

hath made with the Church, but with *me* an everlasting Covenant. I entered on the Properties of this personal Covenant, and spoke to three of them; there are some yet remaining, and therefore I shall proceed, as this personal covenanting with God is of absolute necessity, and is a very deliberat Act, and a sincere Act, so there is a *Fourth* Property of it, its an Act that ought to be timeously, speedily, and early done without delay; some of our Divines in their casuistical Disputs with *Papists*, they rationally alledge, that the Doctrine of the *Popish Casuists* in some Principles, tends to hough all the Practices of Religion; for among other things, they maintain, that if a sinner fall in sin, he is obliged to repent, when he comes under some cross, or at some solemn Ordinance, or at the hour of Death; we maintain against them, that a sinner is obliged to repent, immediatly on the back of the commission of the sin, the same we say of personal Covenanting with God, its to be done without delay, *To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation*, Heb. 3. 7. Cited out of *Psal.* 95. 7. Its not said to morrow if ye will hear his voice, but *to day*; Its true, there are some times and cases, when its sweeter going about this work, than at other times; there are some approaches in Spirit to us, which we should exactly observe, as Courtiers that have their *Nobilissima fandi tempora*, they get some fit opportunities of putting up their Petitions to Princes. 1. Its an excellent time in going about this work, of Indenturing, vowing and resolving with Christ, when the Spirit is making his approaches; yet we are not to delay til these times, for the Command of God lies on us at all times. Its a great delusion of *Quakers*, that think they will not pray, or hear, but when the Spirit comes; the Obligation to Duty is the Command, and the Command lies on us, whether we be in frame, or out of frame. 2*ly*. Its true, the Lord will sometimes deny his People assisting Grace, that he may make way for accepting Grace: He will leave them to toyl, and wrestle with Duties, & then he will take the straitned Duty off their hand; several times he will do with them, as he did with the poor Widow, to whom he gave but two Mites to cast in the Treasury and he accepts of them; He will leave one to toyl and wrestle with Duty, as one

under

under Irons, and then kindly accept of the Duty: ſo whether we be in frame or not, as we ſhould pray, read, and meditate, ſo its not in theſe times only, that we ſhould make a perſonal Covenant with God, but we are to do it without delay, and that upon theſe Reaſons. 1. Hardly is there a greater mercy beſtowed on a perſon, than when they give their youth to God, and begin early to ſeek him; its remarkable, *Solomon* ſhuts up that Book of the *Eccleſiaſtes*, with *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*; the time that others give to vanity, the time that is moſt difficult to be regulat by Reaſon and Religion, we are to give that time to God, and to begin to enter in a perſonal Covenant with him. 2*ly*. It ought to be done without delay, in regard of the uncertainty of time, and of the Goſpel Offers, we are all of us Tennents at will, we know not what to morrow will bring forth, its a wonder to ſee, what a number of doors can eaſily be opened to let us in to the Grave, and many have died very ſpeedily; that young Divine that died in *Holland*, when he was yet a young man, he wrote a Book wherein he ſays, ſome have died of an hair in Milk, ſome have fallen back from off the Stool that they ſat on and died; now ſince both the time, and the offers of the Goſpel are ſo uncertain, this accepting of the Offer, and Indenturing on the Terms of the Covenant, ought to be done with all ſpeed, and without delay. 3*ly*. It ought to be done timouſly and ſpeedily, in regard ay the longer one continues in ſin, and in a natural ſtate, they are conſtantly the more hardned, the Conſcience like a foot that is uſed to go bare, it gathers a ſcurff; what a rare thing is Converſion, in old age how ſeldom falls it out? So that this Work of perſonal Covenanting, ought to be done without delay; for ay the longer its delayed the heart grows the more averſe, and the more hardned, and the cuſtom of ſinning takes away the Conſcience of it. 4*ly*. It ought to be done ſpeedily, in regard many times delays puts the Work wholly by, it is never done when it is delayed; there are ſeverals, as a man reported of himſelf when he was dying, that took this gate of it, If I were once come to thirty years, I would be holy, and when he comes to thirty, he puts off till he came to fourty, and when he came to fourty he died, lamenting that he

he had delayed and put off ſo long. It was ſo with *Felix*, when he heard *Paul* preach of Righteouſneſs and Judgement to come, I will hear thee ſays he, at a more convenient time, and that convenient time never came; yet ordinarly delays evaniſh in nothing. And *Laſtly*, it ought to be done without delay, in regard as we tell *Papiſts* in caſuiſtical Diſputs, that Death-bed Repentance is very ſuſpicious; Its true, we read of one, and but one in all the Bible, the good Thief on the Croſs, who got Repentance at Death, there is one to ſhew its poſſible, and but one, to ſhew that its not very probable. The Scripture calls it an *houling on the bed*, readily the Lord will ſay to them then, *Becauſe I called and ye did not hear, ye ſhal call, and I will not hear, I have ſtretcht out my hand all the day long to a rebellious people*; Its remarkable in the Vineyard, ſome are called at the ſeventh hour, ſome at the eight, ſome at the ninth, ſome at the eleventh; but why are there not ſome called at the twelfth? They ſay, that the twelfth hour is the time of diſmiſſing Servants, and not of putting them to their Work. All theſe preſſes, that this Act of accepting the Covenant, and Indenturing through the Mediator ought to be done early, and without delay. This is the fourth Property,

Fifthly, As it ſhould be done deliberatly, ſincerely, and timouſly; ſo it ſhould be done confidently, and boldly, Heb. 4. 16. *Let us come with boldneſs unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* Let us come bodly μετα παῤῥησιας ſome render the word παῤῥησια, *quaſi* πας ῥημα let us confidently ſpeak out all that is in our heart.

But ye will ask, why may we not do it trembling, fearingly, and doubtingly? I will tell you ſome grounds, on which Faith may build confidence in this Act of Indenturing with God. 1. We have the Command of God to Indenture with Him, and accept of this Covenant; its the great Command he has given, if we ſlight Him in this Command, He values not what we do in other things, John 3. 23. *This is his Command, that ye believe on his Son*: That is a ground of confidence, not only hath He commanded it, but He hath threatned, if we ſlight Him in this; remember the ſimilitude I illuſtrat to you the other day, ſuppoſe ye were coming by a houſe, and

the Maſter of the houſe ſhould cry down to you, come in and eat and drink with me, were it a preſumption for you to come in, eſpecially if he ſhould ſwear, if ye come not in, I will come out and kill you? So the Lord in his Indenturing in the Covenant, hath not only commanded, but hath ſworn by himſelf, that he will caſt you in hell, if ye do not accept of Him. 2*ly*. Deſperat neceſſity is a ground of confidence; I confeſs in all the Books that I have read, o're all the Sermons that I have heard, I know not a poſſible way how to eſcape hell, but by taking hold of this Covenant, deſperat neceſſity helps to boldneſs; ye remember the *Lepers* at the Gates of *Samaria*, who were to hazard on the Camp of the *Syrians*, all the men of War durſt hardly hazard on them, but their motive was good, if we ſtay here we ſhall die, and they hazarded on the Camp of the *Syrians*: if thou be without this Covenant, thou art eternally ruined. Now to go and accept of the Covenant, take hold of it, and perſonally to Indenture with God, it may be a great help and motive to confidence, thou may reaſon with thy ſelf, I am eternally ruined without it, there is no other way to eſcape the fire that burns in the bottom of Hell, but by taking hold of it. 3*ly*. This may be a ground of confidence in going about it, in that there is nothing promiſed in it, but Chriſt hath purchaſed it; its true, all this is of free Grace, in regard the giving of the Purchaſer was an Act of free Grace; *If we confeſs our ſins, he is juſt to forgive*; any would think, it would ſuit better to ſay, He is merciful and gracious to forgive, but he is juſt to forgive; to ſpeak it with reverence, it were inconſiſtent with Juſtice, not to pardon Sin, and ranſome the Elect, for whom He hath received a Price; the Price is payed, and we may ſay, how ſweet ſoever the pardon of Sin be, and peace of Conſcience, and communion with God, yet there is ſomething given for it, beyond the value of them, for they are all purchaſed by the Blood of God. We ſhould do it confidently, in regard when we go to Indenture with God, the want of confidence fills us with doubting, which is very near of kin to unbelief: often, if we be to Indenture with God, the ſmell of Corruptions, and Temptations, and a diſcouraged Spirit ſtriking in with it, makes it like the Meteors that aſcend upward, they may go to and fro, but at

length

length they resolve in Clouds, and fall down upon the Earth again: So, when we go to personal Covenanting with God, doubtings and fears, the smell of guiltiness, and a multitude of Temptations, produces a wavering in the Spirit, which is the next door to unbelief; now to be free of this, we should Covenant with confidence and boldness: There are many that Indenture with him in a personal Covenant, and the next day a very small Temptation makes them doubt that it was a personal Covenant. Why? They had so much fear, and so many doubtings in the management of it; therefore, we are to loup over all our difficulties, and cut them all with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, and this is the right way of managing a personal Covenant with God.

The sixth Property of it, as this Act should be confidently, so it should be done with full purpose of heart, as *Barnabas*, *Acts* 11. 23 Exhorts them all at *Antioch to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart*; this Act of personal Covenanting in our part, the first beginning of it lies meerly in Purposes and Resolutions, on which we cast on the knot of a Vow in personal Covenanting with God; therefore I will speak a little to these Purposes and Resolutions, that in the first Act of the Souls personal Covenanting with God are, that in a manner, wherein the Act of Covenanting with Him consists, and two things I will speak to it. (1.) I shall shew what weight is to be laid on these Purposes and Resolutions of the Heart when its about to Covenant with God. (2ly.) I shall shew you what are the Reasons, why many of these Purposes and Resolutions prove so evanishing.

First, What weight is to be laid on these purposes and resolutions of heart? I desire ye may take notice, that when we come with full purpose of heart to enter in a personal Covenant with God, there is a considerable weight to be laid on these purposes, if ye notice these things. (1.) The rational way of the Spirits working, is first to convince the Understanding, and then to determine the Will to purpose and choose. I confess Philosophers call the purposes of the will *Velleities*, they deny it to be that elicit Act of the will which they call *Velle*, but yet they suppose a complacency of the Object, and

and ye will find theſe three or four things about them in Scripture. *Firſt* When there is no more but a purpoſe, the Lord will commend it, even when one is but purpoſing and reſolving. Its a remarkable word, 2 *Sam.* 7. The Lord ſends the Prophet *Nathan* to *David* to tell him, *Becauſe it was in thy heart to build me a houſe, I will build thee a ſure houſe*; he ſays not, *becauſe thou haſt builded me a houſe.* *David* had no more but a purpoſe of building a houſe, he could not endure to dwell in houſes of Cedar, and the Ark of God in Curtains: any would have thought, that the Lord would have ſtayed until *David* had builded him an houſe, but he had no more but a purpoſe, becauſe it was in thine heart to build me an houſe, I will build thee a ſure houſe. And its remarkable, that the Prodigal *Luke* 15. when he was in a far Countrey, he came only to reſolutions, he is only ſaying, *I will ariſe, and go to my father, and ſay, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee, and when he was yet far off, his Father ſaw him, and ran and kiſſed him, and embraced him.* (2*ly.*) Theſe purpoſes ſeveral times they contribute to determine the Will; the Will is an unſtayed thing in us, its like running water, ye will not find it one hour where it was another, it goes like a wheel, the Spaik that is up now is preſently down, and we are willing the things to day, that we are loathing the morn; its much to get the will determined, and if any thing do it, it will be a purpoſe with the cord of a Vow, and the cord of God faſtning it. (3*ly.*) Theſe purpoſes have ſomething good in them, they are like the flouriſh of an Apple-tree, though it may be it be not compleatly an Apple, yea many of them falls off, and is never an Apple, yet they have ſomething of the Apple in them, there is ſomething of God in theſe purpoſes, its true, its a great aggravation of ones guiltineſs, if God hath convinced them, and brought them to purpoſes and reſolutions; if they fall away from them, its hard to renew them again by repentance, the Lord by his Spirit is doing with them, as a Man taking a Key to open a Lock, if he throw about the Key and open not the Door, he readily ſpills the Lock: where there are purpoſes and reſolutions, and falling away from them, its one to ten thouſand, but the Lock is ſpilt, and readily will never be

be opened by that Key, yet there is good in theſe purpoſes, they are like a ſmoaking flax, that hath ſomething of fire in it, but it can do no more but ſmoak; and he that will not quench the ſmoaking flax, nor break the bruiſed reed, will not readily ſet his foot on theſe purpoſes: ſo when we come to Indenture with God, and with full purpoſe of heart Covenant, that we will keep by the terms of the Covenant, and accept of the offers of it, its a Character of perſonal Covenanting with God.

Queſt. And here I will clear this caſe, what is the reaſon that there are ſo many purpoſes and reſolutions to God that evaniſh, we make a Covenant with him to day, and Indenture againſt theſe ſins that our temptations carries us moſt eaſily away, as there are ſome things wherein every one is weakeſt, what is the reaſon that theſe purpoſes do ſo often evaniſh?

Anſ. I will name two or three things that influences this, (1.) Several times we purpoſe in our own ſtrength, we purpoſe and we go in our own ſtrength: Its a remarkable thing in *Eſther*, ſhe ſaw the danger that the Church of God and her people were in, and ſhe ſends to *Mordecai*, and tells him, *I will go to the King, if I periſh, I periſh*, though it be againſt the Law; but ſays ſhe, *Convocate thy people, and faſt three days, and I and my maids will do likewiſe*; there is a thing difficult to be done, ſhe goes not in her own ſtrength, but carries it on by Prayer: when we go out againſt any corruption within us, we are like *David* going out againſt *Goliah* with a ſling and with a ſtone, and what would that ſignifie? unleſs he had that to tell, *I come to thee in the Name of the Lord, whom thou haſt blaſphemed*; the ſling & the ſtone, and the Name of the Lord was ſtrong enough againſt a *Goliah*; but when we go againſt any corruption in our own ſtrength, we go like *David*, with a ſling, and with a ſtone, and not in the Name of the Lord. The reaſon why our purpoſes evaniſh when we are ſick, or at a Sacrament, or when we are at a low Ebb, we do not as *Eſther*, carry them on by Prayer; nor as *David*, in the Name of the God of Iſrael. (2.) Several times there comes purpoſes and reſolutions in the Soul, or convictions of the Spirit, and theſe purpoſes evaniſh, becauſe they have not been ſincere, deliberate and ſerious enough, readily they have been extorted by fears, and readily

readily we do as *Eraſmus* reports of the Man, that when he was at Sea, vowed he would offer a Pound of Candle to the Virgin Mary when he came to Shore, but when he came to Shore, he ſaid a Plack Candle might ſerve her. Readily we do as that Man, when we are under a ſtrait, we come under vows, and when the ſtrait is over, like one come to Land, we forget all; this is the reaſon why many their purpoſes evaniſh, the Lord will lift off the Croſs, and the Spirit abates their challenges, and the humility that will ſometimes be in them, will but be like the Dogs returning to his vomit again. *Joſephus* tells us, that after the Flood, the Inhabitants of the World that were the Poſterity of *Noah*, for fear of a new Deluge, built their Houſes on the tops of Hills, but when they ſee there is no new Deluge like to come, ye find them in the Plains of *Shinar*, building a *Babel*, whoſe top reaches to Heaven; this is a great cauſe why our purpoſes evaniſh, under a ſtrait we would take the Covenant and the Righteouſneſs of it, but when our fears & challenges are away, like a man in a rainy day, that will take an old Cloak about him, but when the ſhowre is paſt, he lays by the old Cloak. But (3*ly.*) Theſe purpoſes and reſolutions evaniſh, by the company of the ungodly, there is nothing will ſooner cool theſe purpoſes, than the company of the Wicked; Its a remarkable reſolution of *David*, Pſal. 6. *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, Why? I have reſolved to keep his Commands*, and I know I will not follow this reſolution, if ye do not depart from me: oftentimes there is nothing makes purpoſes ſooner evaniſh, than the company of wicked men, therefore the young Man whom *Solomon* would have kept from the whoriſh woman, among many directions he gives this, *My ſon go not near her door*, not only commit no uncleanneſs with her, but go not near her door.

Seventhly, The laſt property of this Act of perſonal Covenanting, as it hath all theſe ſix that I have mentioned, ſo it hath this Character, as it is often broken, ſo it ſhould be often renewed; we are frequently breaking our Covenant; how many times will we bind againſt a luſt, or to the performing of Duty, and readily, if a Man ſhould bind himſelf, as for inſtance, to ſecret Prayer, to reading the Scriptures, the Lord will tryſt him with ſom

ſome tryal, with ſome diverſion, with ſomething that will appear vertue to them, or that will appear to be his intereſt, to try if this will make him break, and if on this account we break, we ſhould be as oft renewing again, and two things will evidence, that when we come to break our Engagement of perſonal Covenanting, we are not to ſay, *there is no help for my Soul in God.* (1.) Take notice that on Gods part with the Elect, if once he have Indentured and Covenanted with them, the Covenant remains conſtantly firm: Think ye the Covenant everlaſting, becauſe we everlaſtingly keep it? Its everlaſting becauſe he is everlaſting, and everlaſtingly keeps it. So he calls often to us to renew this Covenant, *Jer.* 3. *Thou haſt played the harlot with many lovers*; any would have thought, the next word would be, thou ſhalt never be owned by me again; yet the next word is, yet *return unto me, backſliding children, for I am married to you, and I will take you one of a tribe, and two of a family, and bring you to Zion.* (2.) This evidences that the Covenant ſhould be renewed, becauſe the Sacrament of the Supper is renewed, he hath commanded the Sacrament of the Supper to be often taken, and what is that but to renew a perſonal Covenant with him? (3*ly.*) The renewing of the Covenant is our only ſafety, there is no other way of doing for us in ſafety, and eſchewing the wrath of God, but by renewing the Covenant.

Uſe. I will only cloſe this day with a word or two, of practical improvement of all that hath been ſaid of theſe ſeven characters of perſonal Covenanting with God. (1.) I exhort you who are minding this, as the great deſign ye have to put you to accept the offer of his Goſpel, and Indenture with God, on the Terms that are made; labour from all that is ſaid; to take up the Nature and Properties of this perſonal Covenanting with God, many never knew what it meant, and therefore they never practiſed it. But conſider for giving you light in this matter, what ye heard the laſt day, of the Nature of the Covenant, and of the Acts of it, that it is an Act of abſolute neceſſity, there is no ſafety through all Eternity, but in the doing of it; conſider that its an Act that is deliberate, that is ſincere, that is done with confidence, and ſhould have a full purpoſe of heart,

in the beginning of Indenturing with God, and when its broken, ſhould be renewed; take it up thus, and it may give you a great deal of light. (2*ly*.) I would have you for your encouragement, be taking good notice what God doth in this part of the Covenant to you; readily when ye are about to Covenant with him, if he give warmneſs of heart, if he give a full purpoſe of heart, if he give any Act of confidence, if he give deliberately to caſt over the cord of a vow, for our after walking, or if he give full purpoſes and reſolutions of heart, ye may take theſe things from him as an earneſt that he will do more; if ye find theſe things ye may do as *Naomi* to *Ruth*, ſhe goes to *Boaz's* Field, and he bids the Reapers let ſome Heads fall to her; the next day ſhe comes, and he lays on a burden of Corn on her back; *Naomi* finds him taking this courſe with her. ſit down my Daughter, ſays *Naomi*, for the Man will not be at reſt, until thou be Lady of the whole Field: If he be beginning the accompliſhment of the Promiſes, let it be but a Head falling this day, and a Head another day, this is a ſure Earneſt that ye will come to enjoy all that the Covenant contains, and will be Ruler over all that he hath. (3*ly*.) I would have thee that art thus Indenturing, and reſolving from all theſe Sermons, to give thy ſelf to him, and to give him thy ſervice in thy while of this Wilderneſs, do not only purpoſe but endeavour to perform. Its lamentable to hear how much we talk of the Covenant of Promiſes, and what great encouragements there are from it, and yet what a careleſs walk and how unanſwerable to the great things offered; therefore, if thou be indenturing with him, delay it not, but accept it, and reſolve, that thou be for him and not for another; but remember that the *Sundays* Covenanting with him be not broken on the *Munday*, It was a notable anſwer that one gave to Temptation when it offered to draw him away from God, its not lawful, ſays he, for a Man to tempt another Mans Wife, I am married, and another Wifes Husband, and it is not lawful for me to tempt another Mans Wife. Therefore let thy walk in reference to the Temptation and the thing thy heart inclines thee to, let them look like thy perſonal Engagement and Covenant with God, otherwiſe the thing that is thy great

help

ſhall be the greateſt witneſs againſt thee, and thy Judge ſhall tell thee before all the Sons of *Adam*, thou art a Perſon condemned out of thy own mouth.

SERMON XV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

THE laſt day I fell on the Properties of this Duty, of Perſonal Covenanting with God, I ſpoke to ſix or ſeven which I will not now reſume; but becauſe it is ſo neceſſary a Theme, and that which the practice of it affords to many that are now in Glory, a great deal of ſweetneſs, I well yet add three or four Properties of this Perſonal Covenanting with God, before I apply it. *Firſt*, This Perſonal Covenanting, the bringing the Covenant particularly home, as made with me, as it ought to have theſe ſix or ſeven things ye heard of the laſt day, ſo in the eighth place, it ought to be very expreſs, diſtinct and formal, it ought not to be a general entering in a Covenant with God, nor a Concluſion drawn out of a General, but it ought to be an expreſs, formal explicite Covenanting with Him. There are two remarkable Words ye find *David* have, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *O my Soul, thou haſt ſaid to the Lord, thou art my God*, compared with *Pſal.* 35. 3. *Say to my Soul, I am thy Salvation*; lay the two together, *David* in perſonal Covenanting with God, he can give an expreſs account what his Soul ſaid to God, and what God ſaid to his Soul; it ought not to be a meer General, or a Concluſion drawn out of a General, but it ſhould be very explicite and expreſs; and here I will clear two things. (1.) Wherein ought a Chriſtian, in his perſonal Covenanting with God to be expreſs? And (2.) ſhall give you ſome Grounds why we ought to be ſo expreſs in our perſonal Covenanting with God.

Firſt, Wherein ought we to be expreſs in our covenanting? Among many things I will name theſe three. (1.) We

We ought to be very expreſs in this, that it is a Covenant we make with God; it is not a purpoſe, nor a reſolution that we take up, but it is an expreſs Covenant we make; ye have often heard, that of all Tyes, the Tye of a Covenant is moſt binding, no man can looſe himſelf, nor no Society of men can looſe themſelves from the Tye and Obligation of a Covenant with God; Therefore its remarkable when the Lord makes over to Believers the things purchaſed in and by his Sons death firmly and ſurely, he hath amongſt all other ways eligible for that end, pitched on making them on by way of Covenant; he knows well, that of all things that made up a Security, a ſecure right in a Covenant was the moſt firm, ſo when we come to make a Covenant with God, that we may not ſhake our hand looſe, as often we do in purpoſes, we ought to be very expreſs in it; this that I do, and that which I Tranſact, its a formal Covenant, which contains the ſtrongeſt Tye; its not a purpoſe nor a reſolution only, but its a formal and expreſs Covenant, which is neceſſar to be adverted unto, becauſe many at Sacraments, and when they come under the Spirits convictions, they come under purpoſes, and poſſibly ſome kind of Vows, and they ſlip as haſtily from them again; whereas, if they were expreſs in this, that it is a formal Covenant the Soul enters into with God, the obligation would readily appear more binding. (2*ly*.) As we are to be expreſs in this that its a Covenant we Tranſacted with God, that afterward we may remember, ſuch a day I not only purpoſed, reſolved and vowed, but covenanted with God. In the ſecond place, we are to be expreſs in the Terms on which we covenant; and here ye would notice two things. (1.) We are to be expreſs in the things we bind our ſelves to do. (2*ly*.) We are to be very expreſs in the condition, on which we bind our ſelves to do theſe things. *Firſt*. We are to be expreſs in the things we are to do, it is true we are not to make new Duties, nor to put in Terms that are not in the Covenant already; yet there are three particulars, wherein a perſon covenanting with God ought to ſtudy to be very expreſs. *Firſt*, There are the great things in the Covenant that we ſhould believe, mourn for ſin, and pray; theſe things are indiſpenſibly required in the Co-

venant: therefore when we enter in a perſonal Covenant with God, and would be explicite and expreſs about it, we are expreſly to mention the great Articles of the Covenant on our part, whatever we bind our ſelves to do, if we bind our ſelves in the Covenant, to build the Church, and give our Goods to the poor, and our Bodies to the fire, except theſe great Articles of the Covenant be performed, its not a Goſpel Covenant: therefore we ought to be expreſs, in binding our ſelves to theſe great things, indiſpenſibly required by God in the Covenant. (2ly.) In a time of tryal, a Chriſtian ſhould be expreſs, in binding himſelf in a perſonal Covenant, to the owning of theſe Truths and Intereſts that comes to be a caſe of confeſſion; its an eaſie thing to owne uncontroverted Truths, but theſe things, that in our generation come to be a caſe of confeſſion, theſe intereſts, and people that are moſt born down, we are particularly to indenture in a perſonal Covenant with God, eſpecially for the owning of theſe Intereſts: though we are to have reſpect to all his commands, yet eſpecially to theſe that make againſt the errors of the time: Its remarkable, ye find the moſt part of the Prophets writings running againſt Idolatry, and the moſt part of Chriſts Sermons running againſt Hypocriſie, the great reaſon of this is, in *Iſaiah*'s and *Jeremiah*'s time, *Iſrael* was prone to Idolatry, and in Chriſts time, they were overwhelmed with Hypocriſie. (3ly.) A Chriſtian ought eſpecially to bind himſelf to theſe Duties, at which his careleſs heart is moſt ſloathful, and againſt theſe corruptions he is moſt prone to; every man is weakeſt at ſomething, as *Samſon* had his particular wherein his ſtrength lay, ſo every man hath ſomething wherein his weakneſs lies; and when we perſonally Covenant with God, we ought to be expreſs in it; if one be negligent in Prayer, a wanderer in hearing, if one have a gading, light heart in converſing with God, they are not only to purpoſe and reſolve, but to caſt over the cord of a Covenant, on that levity of ſpirit; ſo when we Covenant perſonally and particularly with God, in theſe three above all other things, the Soul ought to be expreſs and particular into it.

But ſecondly, we ought to be expreſs and particular in the conditions on which we bind to theſe things, [illegible] otherwa[illegible]

therways after our covenanting with God, which affords a great deal of peace and ſweetneſs to the Soul, and many of late have gone ſweetly down to the grave, when they have brought out their old perſonal Covenanting with God, and renewed them, & we ought to be expreſs in the conditions, eſpecially in theſe three. (1.) It is a promiſe of the Covenant that God ſhall give ſtrength for performing our part of the Covenant, he hath often promiſed this, *The feeble among you ſhall be as David, and David as the Angel of God, they ſhall renew their ſtrength, and mount up as an Eagle, they ſhall walk and not be weary, run and not be faint*; Now when we bind to the great duties of the Covenant to the owning the Truths and Intereſts of the Goſpel, we are to put in that condition, wherein it is promiſed that he will do theſe duties, *viz.* That all our ſtrength muſt flow from him as a River, and that on theſe Terms, and conditions we bind, providing he give ſtrength; this is the way to make our part of the Covenant, both pleaſant and eaſie, when we go to Chriſt as our Treaſurer, to bring our ſtrength from him, to do what we have covenanted. (2*ly.*) We are to put in this condition expreſly, that he will accept of the will and endeavour, in place of perfection; if we were to make a covenant of Works, as *Adam* did, we were obliged to bind, that we ſhould be perfect in Love, and perfect in Faith; but in the Covenant of Grace, we are to bind according to the terming of the Covenant of Grace, the grace of the Covenant hath made the propoſals of it run in this channel, he it is alone that works in you both to will and do of his good pleaſure, and he will accept of the will in place of perfection. (3*ly.*) We are to indenture in this Covenant on theſe Terms, that all our failings ſhall be covered with the Righteouſneſs of a Cautioner, when we have any challenge for guiltineſs, being in Covenant with him, our only recourſe, like *Manoah*'s Wife, the ſecond time that the Angel came to her, ſhe was not accuſtomed to ſpeak to Angels, ſtay till I call my Huſband, the Covenant holds him out as the only fit perſon to deal with Serpents, whoſe heads he bruiſed: ſo we are to be expreſs in our covenanting, that our failings ſhall be covered with the Righteouſneſs of the Cautioner; ſo ye ſee, this perſonal covenanting with God, is not ſo

dreadful and ſcarring a thing as many take take it up to be, but it is eaſie and pleaſant if it be gone about according to the method of the Goſpel.

The ſecond property of this Covenanting with God ſhall be this, That as it ought to gone about expreſly, explicitly, and diſtinctly, ſo it ought to be gone about according to the method of the Goſpel, no perſon goes about it rightly, that doth not keep in it the method of the Goſpel.

Queſt. Ye will readily ask, what is it to keep a Goſpel method, in covenanting with Chriſt.

Anſw. For clearing of this, I deſire you may take notice of theſe three things, that make up this Goſpel method in a Souls perſonal covenanting with God. (1.) The Goſpel method is kept, when the Law makes way for the Goſpel, I do not deny, but one may enter in a perſonal Covenant with God, that hath not had the Law Work to ſuch a height as others have had; we read of ſome in the Goſpel, that were cut to the heart, before they were brought to believe; ſo there are ſome of them we read of there is no more but the Lord opened their heart, as the Lord opened the heart of *Lydia*, there is no ſuch account of Law-work, as of others, yet this ordinary Goſpel-method of the Laws making way for the Goſpel, was Typified by the ſtinging of the fiery Serpents, before they could look for healing on the braſen Serpent, and readily they will never make a ſincere perſonal Covenant with God, that have not had the challenges and Threatnings of the Law, like an Ax laid to the root of the Tree: Its ordinary for any, when they take up a profeſſion, and and readily ſewes a new profeſſion to an old heart, like new Cloath ſewed to an old Garment, they will preſently enter in a Covenant with God, but it uſes not to be ſicker and laſting, unleſs the Law had made a way for the Goſpel: O but they will come ſweetly and accept his Righteouſneſs, and bind with him upon any Terms, that have been ſitting in priſon: and hath had the Sentence of Death in themſelves, and that hath lien in the Iron, and as it were been hanging over the Pit; it will be but a frothy kind of work the Soul will perform, when there hath been no Law-work, nor Legal humiliation before (2.) In this perſonal Covenanting, this method is to be

kept, that the abſolute Promiſes are to eyed, in order to our performing the conditional Promiſes; when we perſonally Covenant with God, we have to do with a Covenant of Promiſes, but the Promiſes take in Duties, and in order to the performing the condition, we muſt keep the Goſpel-method in the Covenant; Lord, I bind my ſelf in this Covenant, to accept of thy Son, and to believe in him, and to take him for my Husband, but in order to this, ye muſt look on the abſolute Promiſes; there is a Spirit of Faith promiſed, and we never Covenant in a Goſpel-method, when we eye not the abſolute Promiſes in order to the performing the condition of the conditional Promiſes; as for example, a Perſon binds himſelf deliberatly, I am negligent in Prayer, I bind my ſelf againſt negligence, to be more diligent, I am a perſon wandring in hearing, I bind my ſelf in this Covenant againſt it; they have ſtill an eye to ſome abſolute Promiſe, where things are promiſed, an eye to ſome abſolut Promiſe. (3) Ye ſhall take notice, that every man before he enter in a perſonal Covenant with God, he is in Covenant with Death and Hell, Remarkable is that word, *Iſa.* 28. comparing the 15th. and 18th. *verſes*, *Becauſe ye have ſaid we have made a Covenant with death, and with hell are we at an agreement.* Verſ. 18. *And your Covenant with death ſhall be diſanulled, and your agreement with hell ſhall not ſtand, and the overflowing ſcourge ſhall overtake you.* Every natural man is under a Covenant with Death and Hell; Now, when ever we come under a perſonal Covenant with God, that Covenant muſt be broken: The Covenant is like a Marriage Covenant betwixt *Hoſea* and the Woman of Fornications, he is commanded to marry a Wife, an Adultereſs, ſaith he to her, thou ſhalt no more play the Harlot, thou ſhalt be for me, and not for another, ſo will I alſo be for thee; then we keep a Goſpel-method in a perſonal Covenant with God, when the work of the Law drives the Soul to the Goſpel, and when ye eye the abſolute Promiſes, in order to the performing the condition of the conditional Promiſes, and when ye break the Covenant with Death & Hell, like a Woman that is Married, ſhe gives up with all the reſt of her Wooers, becauſe ſhe is Married to another, ſo in this perſonal Covenanting with God, there muſt be a bidding *Adieu* to

all the reſt of the Suiters, and we muſt break covenant with Death and Hell, and Luſts, for we are now Married, and become another Mans Wife, and readily, the thing that was but Fornication before, will be Adultery now.

Thirdly, And laſtly, This perſonal Covenant with God, ought to be compleat, it ought not to have Limitations and Reſervation, but it ought to be compleat, & entire.

Queſt. Readily ye will ask, How is this perſonal Covenant with God compleat, and in what reſpect is it ſo?

Anſw. I might inſtance many Reſervations, that any would make, when they come to indenture in a perſonal Covenant with God, but I ſhall rather chuſe to ſhew you three things wherein this Act of perſonal covenanting with God, becomes intire and compleat, 1. When we give our ſelves wholly to Chriſt, when we give and Covenant our All to him. 2. When we are content in a Covenant, to take Chriſt for All. And 3. When we are content in the Covenant to take all Chriſt as he is offered to us; theſe three makes a compleat Covenanting with him, and in a perſonal Covenant, when the Soul proceeds not diſſemblingly, but ſincerely, its content to make it compleat in all the three. *Firſt*, When we are content to Covenant, to give our ſelves all wholly to him, our Life, our Liberty, we are content to be diſpoſed of, as ye were hearing, as to our lot in the world, yea, as to our Service; ſome he calls to one piece of ſervice, ſome to another, ſome he calls to do, others he calls to ſuffer, and when the Soul is content, wholly to give it ſelf, and its concernment up to him, that he may take their Life if he pleaſe, their Liberty if he pleaſe, and whether he calls for doing or ſuffering, according as he calls, we Covenant to obey him. Many Covenant with him, and they have Reſervations of ſome one thing or another; but when we indeed Covenant as Chriſtians, we are to give our ſelves wholly to him. 2. We are to take him for all, *Pſal.* 73. 25. He that hath made this perſonal Covenant ſigns it over to him, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and on the earth whom I deſire beſide thee?* He hath taken him for his All, he is ſatisfaction to all his deſires; if there were nothing left him but God, as the man ſaid, *there is nothing left me but God*, and then he chides

chideth himſelf, *and but God, and what would I have more?* When we are content to take Chriſt for all, for Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption, and Satisfaction to all deſires, then the Covenant is compleat. 3. When we are content to take all Chriſt, as he is offered, not only the merit of his death, but the authority of his Laws, as a King, we are content to be ſubject to the workings of the Spirit, to the influences, for conſolation, to convictions, to lay our ſelves open, to receive theſe influences, and impreſſions of the Spirit; the Covenant is compleat when all the three are performed. Thus I have run through the Doctrinal part of this Head, of perſonal Covenanting, and have laboured to open it up, as fully as I could, in the nature of it, and grounds and properties of it, I will only break in on the practical part at this time, and make way for following it in the Afternoon.

Uſe 1. *Firſt*, Is it a Duty perſonally to Covenant with God, and particularly to be able to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*? Then firſt it ſerves for Information, and it informs of five or ſix particulars. 1. Is it a Duty thus perſonally to Covenant with God? then certainly it muſt be a great ſin to neglect it, the neglecting of this perſonal covenanting, and indenturing with God, muſt be a very great guiltineſs; by the Law of contraries, if the one be a duty, the neglect of it muſt be a ſin; many has never laid the guilt of not entring in a perſonal, particular, expreſs Covenant with God to heart; readily there are ſome who have come under ſome general confuſed Reſolutions, and poſſibly under ſome vows to God, but to go and firmly ſtate a Covenant, wherein they indenture to accept of the offer of Chriſt in the Goſpel, and to bind to the Terms, on which the offer is made, without altering of any of the Terms; how few take up this for a guilt, yet certainly there is a great deal of guilt in it, if ye ſhall take a view of the five or ſix Grounds, that I brought this day Fourthnight, to prove the neceſſity of perſonal Covenanting with God. Therefore without reſuming any of them, I do exhort all the multitude, that are hearing this Sermon, that they would be convinced, that the neglect of this is a very provocking guiltineſs againſt God; yea, it is a Mo-

then

ther sin, and its a Nurse to other sins, if thou knew what it were personally to Covenant with God, readily there would not be so much neglect of morning Prayer, and Family worship, and there would not be so much libertytaken in your walk,the bond oftheCovenant would restrain thee; nay, its not only a Mother sin,and a Nurse to other sins,but its the highest affront that can begivento God, who offers his Son in the Gospel, and thou has never given a particular and personal acceptance of him.

SERMON XVI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

AN Historical Faith, such as the Devils have, who *believe and tremble*, will assent to this Truth, That God hath made a Covenant; but it requires a saving and justifying Faith, to put to these two words with it, *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant.* I have handled the Doctrinal part of this great Duty, of personal Covenanting; and now I come to the practical part; I began in the Forenoon with an *Use* of Information of five or six Branches. 1. Is it a Duty personally to Covenant with God? then the neglect of it must be a sin, every contrariety to a Duty is sin, its indeed sin of the highest degree, however many that are challenged by a natural Conscience for other sins, do not ponder it, it is a mother sin, and an affronting of the Father in his Son. But 2. If this personal Covenanting be a Duty, then its no presumption personally to Covenant with God; it is well observed by some practical Divines, there are many things, that it were presumption in us to require them of God, but its no presumption to do them, when they are commanded of God; indeed for us to have dreamed of such a thing, as that the Son should marry us, that the Spirit should dwell in us, and that we should have such a Covenant of Promises, it had been presumption

in us to require them; but being made Duties, it cannot be made presumption to us to obey them; there are many stand at a personal Covenanting with God, what, so great a God, so great offers as himself, and his Son, and to be made ruler over all that he hath: but since his liberal heart, hath not only offered them, but hath commanded us, under the pain of his Displeasure, it can be no presumption to obey, though I confess, it had been presumptive to require them. 3. Is it a Duty personally and particularly to Covenant with him, then it necessarly follows, that our Duty is our Honour; a very great priviledge, what, God to be our God, and to be in Covenant with him, to be able to take up the Bible, and read the part of the Verse, which is agreeing to our case, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*, what greater priviledge than this? *Saul* made an offer of his Daughter in Marriage to *David*, he was lately following his Fathers sheep, *Seemeth it a small thing to you*, saith he, *to be Son in Law to a King*? But the offer made it *David's* duty to imbrace the offer, and the King's Command, and his duty became his Priviledge.

And here ye would notice two Things by the way. 1. That it is remarkable, that the great duties of the Gospel, are not meer Service, but a Christians greatest Honour; Believing, delighting in God, walking with him, rejoycing of him, are not meer Service, but a Priviledge, which is necessary, to be observed by some, who think, if they win at Duties, they are advanced to great Honour, and they take up the want of them, as their Affliction; these are thy Duty, and the want of them is thy Sin. But there are others, that take up the Duties of the Gospel, as their duty, but they go about them Toyling and Wrestling, but they took them not up as their Priviledge, and yet they are both woven through other, and our Duty is our greatest Priviledge. 4. If this personal Covenanting with God be a Duty, then we are not to Dispute, whether we should enter in this Covenant or not; commanded Duties should not be Dispute, he is not a Servant, that thinks he understands himself so well, that if his Master command him to go, or to come, that will stand and debate with himself, whether it is most convenient for me to go, or to come? the Masters will

is to determine him in this; its ordinary for us, we are more in diſputing our Duty, than in doing our Duty, we are conſtantly debating this Queſtion and that Queſtion, and our converſe together, is more in diſputing, than in helping one another to do; but that which is Duty, ſhould not be diſput; readily the adverſary, (if one be about this duty of perſonal Covenanting with God) will bring in this, & that, and a third thing, but not to lay by the Duty, yet to delay it, but this is duty, and it is a notable evidence of a faithful Servant to his Lord and Maſter, that will not diſput his duty, but will make all the inquiry how he ſhould do it. 5. If it be a duty thus perſonally to Covenant with God, then we are not to ſtand on Events, about our duty, for where ever there is duty, we are not to conſider Events, the great reaſon that Schollars give of this, ſay they, when God commanded the Duty he foreſaw the Events, and its a reflection upon his Wiſdom, to think he would engage his People in duty, and not care for them in the Events; ſome need not be careful about the Event, why? we are clear about our duty. Now if this perſonal Covenanting be, as it is proven to be, a duty for us to ſit down, and calculat, as with Counters, this will coſt me ſo much doing, and that will coſt me ſo much ſuffering, no, in the matter of duty, we are not to debate the Event, he that commanded the duty, foreſaw the Event before he commanded it, and we are to leave the ordering of the Event to him, O! ſays one, if I Covenant with him, I will look for a harſh life of it; ſays another, I will never be able to wade through the things I ſee, if I engage in a perſonal Covenant with him; all theſe things ſhould be referred to him, who commanded the Duty. *Laſtly*, If this be a duty perſonally to Covenant, it informs us, that certainly theſe who indenture with him, will get ſtrength to perform, for they are about a duty, however it may be the failings that adhere to our corrupted nature may accompany us in the duty, yet if they be not wilful failings, but that they be in ſincerity, minding their duty, the caſe will be, as if a Father call to a Child, to give him a Glaſs of Wine, and the Child takes the Glaſs, and throws it in a paſſion on the Ground, and breaks it, no queſtion, the Father will be angry at him, and ſcourge him;

him; but if the Child take the Glass and fill the Wine, but his shaking arm lets the Glass fall; readily the Father will pity him, because it is an infirmity accompanying his arm. There are in our performing Duties, many infirmities accompanying our Arm, we will not get it perfectly done, but the Arm will shake, and let the Glass fall, yet if we set sincerely about the Duty, we will get strength to perform; *They that wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength.* All these Uses of Information, follows from this natively, that this Personal Covenanting with God, is a Duty. it is no Phanaticism, it is a commanded Duty, it is the great Duty of the Gospel, it is, on the matter, all one with Believing; It is no presumption to *Covenant* with him. But I insist not on this, there are some more special and practical Improvements of it, than this General; Therefore I proceed.

Use 2. To a second Use of Information, Is this personal Covenanting with God a Duty, and so great a Duty, as is proven, then be exhorted to Covenant with Him; I have press'd you before, to go home and do it, and not delay it, and to make it as express and distinct, as to the Terms, as ye can; And either with writing, or saying over to God, as that place ye heard cited, *Isaiah* 44. *One shall say, and another subscribe with his hand, I am the Lords.* But this Use of Exhortation, that I may the more distinctly handle it, I shall follow it, with reference to two sorts of Persons in the visible Church, and in this place, who have need of Exhortation. 1. There is a multitude of carnal careless Professors, that readily are at the pains, to wait on Ordinances, and Externals of Religion are punctually observed; But for personal Covenanting with God, for ever having done any thing of this kind, they are great strangers to it. That I may at least, leave a conviction on these, I will speak a word to two things. 1. What are the things that hinders the Generality from this, of personal Covenanting with God? 2. What is their misery.

Quest. First, What is it that hinders the Generality from this personal Covenanting with God?

Answer, Among many things, I will name these Four.

First, A great many understand not the nature of the Covenant, they are in the estate of nature, they are under the Covenant of Works; it is a Truth beyond all controversie,

verſie, all natural Men, however they may be viſibly under the Covenant of Grace, they are really under the Covenant of Works: They are in the firſt *Adam*, and therefore they are under his Covenant, until they be really united and married to Chriſt: The Covenant is the Contract, and until we marry the Man, we have no right to the Contract, now the Generality underſtand not the miſery and danger of this Covenant, they conſider not that it is a Covenant that requires perfect and perſonal Obedience, they are under a Covenant, if they fail in the leaſt, they muſt be damned for it; However they cry to Chriſt, and die hoping in Chriſt, yet their Covenant admits not of a Chriſt, nor of a Cautioner; Nay, the Covenant they are under, admits not of Repentance: It is remarkable, the Covenant made with *Adam*, was on theſe Terms, In *the day thou eats, thou ſhalt die*; It is not ſaid, in the day thou eats, *if thou repent, thou may be ſpared*; No, it admits of no Repentance, if *Eſau* ſhould ſeek the Bleſſing with tears, he cannot have it, he rews that he had ſold his Birth-right, but he could not obtain the Bleſſing though he ſought it with tears: Even *Adam* in the State of Innocencie could not keep this Covenant, the Generality conſider not the miſery of it, but were it pondered as becomes Men, that in a little will meet in the Valley of Deciſion, and reckon before the Tribunal of God, for ye are under a Covenant that admitts not of a Chriſt nor Cautioner, nor of Repentance, but it requires perſonal and perfect Obedience; If it were ſeriouſly pondered, O! what pains there would be, to get a Covenant made with God through the Son. 2. The Generality do neglect this perſonal Covenanting with God, becauſe other things take up their time, it is very remarkable, *Iſa.* 55. 2, 3. and 4. *Incline your ear and come unto me, hear and your ſoul ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David*; But what goes before? *Why ſpend ye your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not?* There is the impediment, that hinders many from entering into this perſonal Covenant, they are ſo taken up, ſpending their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which ſatisfies not, that their ear is not inclined to hearken unto this everlaſting Covenant with Chriſt; readily the thing hinders you from perſonal Covenanting, that hindered *Martha*

from

from hearing Christ, she was busie taken up in the house; *Martha*, saith Christ, *thou art troubled about many things*: And very lawful things may be sinful hinderances, in the way of this Covenanting. It is remarkable, the Persons that sent the Answer to the Master of the Wedding, when he sent out his servants to invite them, the one of them says not, I have a Whore, I cannot come; another says not, I have a drunken Sawing to count, I cannot come; but one of them says, I have a Farm; another, I have a yoke of oxen, another, I have a marriage, I cannot come: All the three were lawful things, but they became sinful hinderances, in the way of coming to the Wedding. No, the Truth is, Earthly-mindedness lyes in the way of many, in this place of personal Covenanting with Christ. *They spend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not.* 3. A third impediment in the way of the Generality, in making this personal Covenanting with God, it is this, they are like a Woman that is already married, marrying another Husband. *They have made a covenant with death, and with hell are they at an agreement*, as ye heard cited from *Isaiah* 28. It is true, That is *making lies their refuge*, as it is called in that same place; Yet they cannot break that Covenant, they cannot break the Covenant they have made with their Lusts, sometimes they are inclining to break it, they are oftentimes like a sleepy Servant in a house, the Master calls him, he will cry, coming, and immediately falls a sleep again: Several times, they will break that Covenant with their Lusts, but that is but like the morning Dew, or an early Cloud, like *Ephraim*'s goodness, it soon goes away, they cry coming, and then falls asleep: Now, the great impediment of the Generality, that hinders them from personal covenanting, there is a Covenant driven, and roved, and subscribed, and Sealed with Death, and Hell, and Lusts; and they cannot break this Covenant, they cannot shake it off. *Lastly*, It impeds the greatest part, the Generality, their entering in this personal Covenant with Christ; fear of Difficulties, if they shall Indenture with him, they must resolve with the Cross, they know indeed there is much good gotten with him, but there is evil also; there are Reproaches and Crosses, as some of the Heathens professed to the Primitive Christians, that they could imbrace the Gospel, but they could not burn for it;

But, as we have ſaid, where there is a Queſtion about the Duty, we are to leave the Events to him that hath commanded the Duty; for he hath commanded no Duty, but he foreſaw the Events, and will regulat them, and yet ordinarly, we cannot truſt him with Events: Theſe things makes among many, that may be brought, that the Generality of natural Men, and the Generality of them that are living in the viſible Church, they reſt on the Covenant of Baptiſm, and the Supper of the Lord, but to take them to conſider their miſery they are under, by continuing in their natural eſtate; And what intanglements from the World, lyes in their way, and what a difficulty it is, to break the Covenant with Death and Hell, and that they ſhould leave Events to the Lord: They cannot look through them, therefore they go on in the houſe of their pilgrimage, from twenty years old to thirty, and from thirty to ſixty, and like ſheep they are laid in the Grave, and Death hath dominion over them: Theſe are the impediments that the Generality have lying in the way of perſonal Covenanting with God.

In the ſecond place, There are ſome that go an higher length beyond theſe that I have ſpoken to; It may be they come under ſome ſmplicite Covenant with God, that dare never venture on an expreſs, formal, ſtated Covenant with Him, either to ſubſcribe with his hand, or to lift up, as ſome that make perſonal Covenants will do, or to open the mouth, by ſome ſolemn Engagement to him, they dare not come this length, and there are three or four things uſe to ly in their way, and I would gladly caſt up the Gates, and remove the ſtumbling blocks that ly in their way. 1. Sometimes before we can truſt God, we would have ſurer Pledges from him than his Word; It is a difficult thing to live the Life of Faith, and very often his People would have ſome Senſe and Experience before they can perſonally Covenant with God, like *Thomas*, he would not believe, until he ſaw the print of the nails; And yet he came at length to do it, *Thou art my God, and my Lord*, ſays he, This was a great injury done to him, but he had to do with one, that could ſoon forgive injuries; It was a great wrong, not to believe the Reſurrection of Chriſt, he had been often told of it before, and yet I will not believe until I ſee the print of the nails, and put my hand in the holes of his ſide; And really many of his People, before they Indenture and Co-

venant with him, they would have ſome ſenſible Proof and Experience of his Covenant, I will not believe while I ſee the print of the nails, before I can ſay, *My Lord, and my God*; This was a great injury, *but he hath magnified his Word above all his Name*, and yet oftentimes, when we think of perſonal Covenanting, we cannot credit the Word of him who cannot lie: This ſeveral times keeps back his People from perſonal Covenanting, they can tell, O! ſuch a Covenant, ſuch a ſure one, and ſuch Promiſes are in it, and made by a God that cannot lie, O! ſay they, I ſee not the print of the nails, the hole in the ſide, and therefore they refuſe perſonally to Covenant until they get ſuch a meaſure of Senſe. It is juſt that they go mourning over the want of it. 2. Sometimes his People refuſe thus to Covenant perſonally with him, becauſe they miſtake the Work of the Law, and the Conviction of the Spirit, accompanying the Law; frequently, if the Law, like a Sword put into the Spirit's hand, begin to wound, they preſently think there is no more for them, but to dwell on ſorrow; or like *Jacob*, if they ſhould live to gray hairs, they ſhould go down to grave with ſorrow, for ordinarly the Spirit and the Law wound together, and it is ſtrange to ſee the thing, that Chriſt intends to drive to perſonal Covenanting with him, ſhould be the thing, that ſhould hinder us from it: The great end why the Spirit takes the Law, and convinces and challenges, it is not to drive us from the Covenant, the great end of the Law is, to be a School-Maſter to lead us to Chriſt, it was evil Logick in *Peter*, to ſay, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man*; it was far more ſuitable to have ſaid, *Come to me, for I am a ſinful man*; this readily hinders many from coming to Chriſt, and perſonally to Covenant with him, they think it ſuits beſt with them, to cheriſh the Challenges of the Spirit, and Convictions of the Law, and to dwell on them, if it were to get the grave, with no other Religion, than what that hath produced, altogether miſtaking the deſign of the Spirit, which is in all theſe Convictions, and Work of the Law, to drive us to a perſonal Covenant with him. But 3. A third impediment that lyes in the way of this perſonal Covenanting, it is this, many a time theſe who would go about it, they account the things in the Covenant ſo far above them, that they cannot offer to claim at them; what, ſay they, God

to be their God, and Glory to be theirs, himself to be theirs, and to be made Ruler over all that he hath; oftentimes this keeps many of his People from personal Covenanting with him; They are like some weak eye, that is dazled with looking upon the Sun, the Sun is so bright; The things offered in the Covenant are so great, that in a manner, they put out their eyes: As I hinted at already, indeed it had been presumption in us, to have required them, but it is none to obey them, when they are commanded; it had been great presumption in *Peter*, to have come to Christ, and said, *Lord, wash my feet*, but it was a great sin in *Peter*, when Christ girded himself with a Towel, and came to wash his feet for him to say, *Thou shalt never wash my feet*; Christ takes him sharply up for it, *If I wash thee not*, says he, *thou hast neither part nor portion in me.* Frequently we look on the things of the Covenant, as so great and so far above us, that we cannot personally Covenant with him, whereas it is above thy Father's House, and all thy Kin, to require them, but since thou art commanded, and threatned with hell, except thou personally Covenant, there cannot be any presumption in it. 4. A great many who would incline to this personal Covenant, are hindered by this great Impediment, discouraging Temptations, many of which I could name, but I will only say this now, since it is this use of Exhortation that I am on, I would exhort you to go about this Work of personal Covenanting, all ye that are in nature, and are hindered with this, that ye would have more from Christ nor his bare word, or the Covenant, or ye that are mistaken with the Law, or any of you that think the Covenant above you, or that are hindered with discouraging temptations, I exhort you to go home, and make this personal Covenant, and I shall only say these three or four words about it. 1. I would exhort thee to take some time for considering and conferring with thy self, I delight to read the Books of some that write of personal Covenanting, to read of their Soliloquies, to sit down and consider, it is not long since I came into the World, and it will not be long before I be out of it. And wherefore came I into the World? Are these Scriptures the Word of God? If they be, I must either hearken unto them, or else be damned; If I be in a Covenant of Works, I am under a Covenant that admits of no Cautio-

ner, no Repentance, and if there be the least fail, it will bring me to hell; But here I see another Covenant of Grace; but if I enter in this Covenant, I must be holy, or then will be eternally damned, and there is a Spirit of Faith, and Prayer, and Repentance, will be given me: Now, will ye take time, and confer these things with your own heart? 2. I exhort you in order to the putting of this in practice, Christian, to carry it on by Prayer, when ye go about it; ye may warrantably say to God, Lord, I am pressed from yonder Pulpit, to make this Ingagement and Indenture, and I am told the Method that I must keep, must be to wait on thy Strength, to wait on the absolute Promises: Therefore go to him, and pray for Strength, and the accomplishment of the Promise, and this will be a sweet Evidence, that thou wilt get it, if thou get liberty to seek it by Prayer, *Psal.* 10. 17. *He hath prepared my heart to seek him, and he hath caused his ear to hear*; The case is with thee, as with a Man that hath a Petition to give to a Prince, if the Man sit down to write it, and the Prince bid him put in this and that in it, it is an Evidence that he will grant it: 3. I exhort thee even to use some Solemnity in entering this Covenant, either by writing it down, or subscribing it with the hand, or lifting up the hand, or some solemn uttering the Words, that the next day, when any thing bids thee break thy Covenant that is dear to thee, as nothing could be dearer to thee, than *Jephthah*'s Daughter was to him, say as he said, *O! my daughter, thou art a trouble to me*, what is the matter, *I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and how can I go back.*

SERMON. XVII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my Desire, although he make it not to grow.

THE last day I spoke to an Use of Information, and proved, that this personal and particular Cove-

nant was a duty, and the neglect of it was a ſin, and that our duty was our priviledge, and that it was no preſumption to enter in this Covenant; without further Recapitulation, I ſhall proceed to the ſecond Uſe.

Uſe 2. If perſonal Covenanting with God be a duty as is proven and cleared, then it ſerves for Exhortation, to ſtir up all of you thus perſonally to Covenant with God; its not only a duty, but as I have proven it, its the great duty of the Goſpel, all other duties without this, are unacceptable, we can neither lay claim to Chriſt, nor to the priviledges of the Covenant, untill we thus perſonally and particularly Indenture with him.

Before I preſs this Uſe, that I may in the afternoon more perſwaſively follow it on you, that ye would thus perſonally and particularly Covenant with God; I will in this Sermon inſiſt on two things, (1.) I will remove ſome Objections, or Impediments, that ly in the way of the Souls perſonal Covenanting with God. (2.) I will open ſome advantages that will follow on the doing of it; the truth is, in ſo neceſſary a duty, we are to do as ſome that write the Jewiſh Hiſtories tells us, that the Magiſtrats throughout all the Land, they were obliged to have the high ways plain, and Bridges over the Waters, and the ſtones removed out of the high way that led to the City of Refuge, that he that fled from the avenger of Blood, might have no ſtop in his way; I would do this in handling this duty of perſonal Covenanting, that among many, I ſhall pitch on four or five impediments that ly in the way, and prove obſtructions, notwithſtanding all the Sermons that ye have heard of it.

Firſt, It may be ſaid, Shall I thus perſonally and particularly Covenant, to accept of Chriſt and Indenture and vow and ſwear to the Terms of the Covenant, ſince I know not if I be an Elect? Election is a fundamental priviledge, and if that be wanting, all that we do in this is but like a houſe without a foundation; one might as well go and Sow another mans Land, and build a House on another mans Ground, that hath no Bond, nor Charter, nor Seaſin, nor any other Right to it, as a Reprobate can go and plead the priviledges of the Elect, and I know not if I be an Elect, and therefore ſhall I go and make a perſonal and particular Covenant with God? This is indeed

indeed a very natural objection, but I would desire you to consider these three or four things, that will contribute to remove it. (1.) Know that Election is not the ground, or the clearing about the ground of our believing and closing with Christ, in the Covenant we are not to proceed on this ground, I am an Elect, and I will close with Christ in the Covenant, and make a personal Covenant with him, but rather our closing with him is a *Medium* or Argument to prove our Election; we are not to proceed on this method, I will first be clear of my Charter Election, & of the purpose of God, before I build on this ground, no, we were first to build on this foundation, and then to be clear of Election: for though Election be first in the order of Christs working, Calling is first in the order of our knowledge, and we must first know that we are called, before we know that we are Elected (2.) Consider this, where will ye find in Scripture, that ever God secluded men from any promise in the Covenant merely because they were not Elect? He hath indeed secluded many, because they were not Believers, & because they were scandalous & hypocrites, but in all the Bible ye will never find him seclude any merely because they were reprobats, why should we go to put in an exception, where he makes none? Its not our Election, or Reprobation, that is made an impediment in all the Bible, against our being bettered by Christ, our unbelief may be one, but our Election is none (3.) Ye would notice this, that the debate about our Election and Reprobation is very impertinent, before our Effectual calling, and closing with Christ in a personal Covenant. Its observed by Shool-men that there are only three ways possible for a man to know his Election, there is the reading of the Book of Gods Decrees, the Revelation of the Spirit, and thirdly the fruits of Election, appearing in the progress of Sanctification; now the first two are impossible for us; we cannot read the Books of Gods Decrees, we cannot tell who are Elect, or who are Reprobate, out of the Book of his Decrees, we cannot tell the Revelations of the Spirit, before our Effectual Calling, it may convince and challenge, but it cannot reveal, therefore it remains, that it must be the Third, which cannot be untill we personally Covenant with Christ, So, to dispute our Election be-

fore we Indenture with him, and to ſay; I will not Covenant with him, for I am not an Elect, thou muſt have underſtanding, to read the Book of Gods Decrees, and to have the Revelation of the Spirit. 4*ly*. Conſider, that our Election is not our duty, its our priviledge, but not our duty, we cannot elect our ſelves, a ſervant in an houſe, is not bound to be moſt taken up about his Maſters ſecret thoughts, the thing he is moſt to be taken up about, is his Maſters command, and that what he hath bidden him do; we cannot elect our ſelves, God hath not commanded it. Now when we are perſonally Covenanting with Chriſt, its not our duty to enquire about things that are not our duty. God hath commanded us to accept of his Son on the Terms offered, and for us to refuſe, for a thing that he hath never commanded to be our duty; we cannot be ſure of Election, untill we perſonally and particularly Covenant with him, we may like a Husband-man know, that it is the Spring time, by the Springing of the graſs, he knows it not by the poſition of the Heaven, but by the ſpringing of the Graſs and Herbs, ſo we would be clear of Election: and I would warn Chriſtians of this, when Satan hath a mind to bring a perſon under the neglect of ſome duty, he will readily puzzle them with Queſtions of Election, or Reprobation, as a Robber, that will ride with a man in a fair high way, and not wrong him, but will wait untill he get him in ſome Wood, or ſome Den, and then he will aſſault him: Now the Queſtion of Election and Reprobation, is like a Wood, or a Den, and the Tempter hath great advantage, when he aſſaults about theſe. Therefore ſince Election is not our duty, but our priviledge, and ſince we cannot know it, before we perſonally Covenant; it ought to be no exception to thee, ſuppoſe thou be in the dark about thy Election, & not be able to tell thine own heart and thy neighbours, I know not if I be an Elect, and if I perſonally Covenant with him, I am but like a man that is going to build upon another mans ground, that hath neither Bond nor Charter; but thou follows not the Goſpel method, which is firſt to Covenant with him, & then to be clear about thy Election.

A ſecond Objection that I ſuppoſe will ly in the way in hearkning to the Sermons that ye have heard; I am exceeding

exceeding guilty, and ſhall I own God to be my God? Doth not the 50. *Pſalm* ſay, *What haſt thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth, ſeing thou hates to be reformed?* Shall I take this Covenant in my mouth, when I have ſuch a heart, and ſuch a way? Readily all the aggravations of guilt, and all the threatnings againſt it, they come never to be more multiplied, than when we are called to ſome ſpecial duty; the challenges about guilt, will let us alone at one time, that will follow us at a Sacrament, or ſome ſolemn Ordinance, and when we ſhould perſonally Covenant with him. For removing of the impediment, I would have thee firſt in the general, notice, that to ſtand at a perſonal covenanting with God; becauſe thou art guilty, is very like *Peters* Argument, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man*; and *Peters* Argument is, like as a Patient ſhould ſay to a Phyſician, depart from me, for I am ſick: Why ſaid he to him who is called Jeſus, becauſe He ſhould ſave His people from their ſins, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man.*

But more particularly to this, thy guilt can be no rational impediment in the way of thy entering in this perſonal Covenant, on theſe conſiderations: (1.) Know, that never any entered in this Covenant, but guilty perſons. *Adam* that was an innocent man, came not under the Covenant of Grace, untill he became guilty; and it had been unſuitable for *Adam*, ſo long as he was innocent. never any came under this Covenant but guilty perſons; and ſometime they that came under it, were among the moſt guilty, the like of *David*, of *Paul*, of *Manaſſeh*, of *Mary Magdalen*: ſo that thou miſtakes the nature of this Covenant, that will ſtand at Indenturing and ſubſcribing to the Lord, becuſe thou art guilty, for its a Covenant made for the guilty, & it would not have agreed to *Adam* when innocent. (2*ly*.) Thou would take notice, that the Covenant expreſly mentions the pardon of all guilt except one, its a large word, its true, its a dreadful word, but it is exceeding comfortable, *All manner of ſin and blaſphemy ſhall be forgiven, except the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*: There neither Adultery, Murther, Swearing, Lying nor Drunkenneſs excepted, but only this ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, why ſhould thou put in exceptions, where God hath put none? If a Prince ſhould

come

come and ſuit a Maid in a Cottage, and ſhe ſhould tell him, I am black and poor; but if he can diſpence with her blackneſs and poverty, why ſhould ſhe make an objection of it? (34) I would have thee to ponder, that Chriſts Righteouſneſs its a ſufficient ſatisfaction for the ſins of all the Elect, how great ſoever thy guilt be, its not ſo great as the ſins of all the Elect; grant thou be the greateſt ſinner among all the Elect, yet thy ſin is not ſo great, as the ſins of all the Elect; Chriſts righteouſneſs is as the Ocean, that if a man could lift a Mountain and caſt it into the Sea, the Waters could go over the top of it; now would any think, that the Water that covers a Mountain, would not cover a Peeble ſtone? Admit thy ſin be amongſt the greateſt of the Elects, *Paul* when he calls himſelf the chief of ſinners, he ſays not, he is greater than all ſinners; but take in the ſins of all the Elect, Chriſts Righteouſneſs is ſufficient for them all, and that which is ſufficient for all, is it not ſufficient for thee? So guilt can be no exception to refuſe perſonally to Covenant with God.

A third Objection, ſay ſome, though it be neither my Election, nor my guilt, that can hinder me perſonally to Covenant with God, yet I cannot come under the Bond of the Covenant, for in one Chapter, *Heb.* 11. I find the faithful, and they that come under this Covenant, they meet with *cruel mockings, and ſcornings, torturings, ſawn aſunder, quenched the violence of fire, ſtopt the mouths of Lyons*; and ſhall I come under a perſonal Covenant, when I bind my ſelf to all theſe things? For anſwer to this, its true, in the Covenant he deals ſo faithfully that hath made it, that he hath concealed none of theſe, but rather laid them out to the outmoſt, and many come under a perſonal Covenant with him, that comes not under the half of theſe things; but ſuppoſe thy perſonal covenanting with him, ſhould bring thee under theſe, ſince it is a time wherein covenanting with him may bring people under the Croſs, I would have thee conſider four or five things. 1. Conſider the Croſs as a teſtimony for Chriſt Its remarkable, 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. That the Apoſtle calls the *Corinthians Chriſts Epiſtle*, his meaning is they are Chriſts Teſtimonial, he is ſpeaking before of Letters of Commendation, and *verſ.* 3. *Ye are Chriſts Epiſtle*

What

What is the meaning of that? Ye are a commendation to Chriſt; when Chriſt calls out his ſervants to do or ſuffer, they bear Teſtimony to the Goſpel, they are like Letters of commendation, teſtifying, that the Goſpel is true, and Chriſt is glorious, and all the loſs a man ſuſtains for the Goſpel Chriſt makes it up. Its a wonder, that the moſt part of Chriſts followers have not renounced him before this day; they have had cruel mockings and ſcourgings, and the reſt ſpoken of in that, *Heb.* 11. If they were not made up ſome other way, they would renounce him; the Martyrs have before all the the World, teſtified, that they that ſerve Chriſt, have ſomething from him that makes up all their loſſes: he puts a great honour on us, when he puts us to ſuffer, many die Miniſters, who do not die Martyrs; *Luther* the night before he died, wept that he was not a Martyr: did we underſtand the honour that is put upon us by ſuffering, we would not do as *Moſes*, when the Lord is ſending him to *Egypt*, he is unwilling to go, ſays he to God, I am not eloquent, I cannot ſpeak, ſend by whom thou wilt; and yet of all the honour that ever was put upon him, it was one of the greateſt, and the thing that makes him famous this day, and eminent in glory, was the honour that was put upon him, in going down to *Egypt*: Therefore we ought not to decline perſonal Covenanting, becauſe of the Croſs. 2*ly*. Though it be true, that this Covenant provides the Croſs, and they that enter in it, will meet with it, yet conſider the Croſs as an evidence of our Adoption: not only as a Teſtimony to the Goſpel, but as an evidence of Adoption, Heb. 12. 8. *If ye be without correction whereof all are partakers, then are ye baſtards, and not Sons.* Mark here the Evidence of a Son if you come under correction. Divines ſay, the reaſon is, if we have the ſame ſpirit that Chriſt had, if we be patient and ſubmiſſive, as Chriſt was, then we may conclude that we are Sons alſo of Chriſt, Chriſt met with the Croſs, and endured patiently, nay, the out-lettings of Fatherly love, never more than under the Croſs, he is never more tender, than under the Croſs, *the Spirit of Chriſt and glory reſts on you*, he ſays not the Spirit of grace, but glory: many a time Chriſt doth with his out-letting, as men do with Candles and Fire, frequent-

ly his out-lettings are greateſt under the Croſs, and he lights his Candle ordinarly to his Elect, when in the dark, and kindles his Fire & comforts them under the Croſs. Now ſince the Croſs is ſuch an evidence of Adoption, and ſuch a Teſtimony of the Goſpel, what wonder, it ſhould be no impediment in our way of Covenanting with Chriſt? 3*ly*. However, if ye perſonally Covenant with Chriſt, ye may forecaſt with the Croſs. Yet thirdly conſider, what an excellent help the Croſs is to mortifie corruption? Iſai. 27. 9 *By this ſhall the iniquitie of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away ſin*: readily, nothing contributes ſo much to curb corruption, as the Croſs; Its an obſervation of a Divine, if he heard Chriſtians complaining one to another, I have an evil heart, I have Unbelief, I have Pride, I have Paſſion, and if ye heard them go to God in a corner, they will have ſo many complaints of themſelves, and yet when God ſends the Executioner, the Croſs to kill theſe Malefactors, they take ill with it; the Croſs is ſent for that end to kill corruption, and to remove Pride, and earthly mindedneſs, and ſenſuality; and yet when the Executioner comes, we take ill with it, what a deal of folly is it to be mourning for the thing that we cannot endure to have killed? Such Children are we, and ſo far from underſtanding, that we will go to God and complain, and complain to our Chriſtian Friends, and yet when the Executioner comes, we cannot endure to have it killed? But when we take up the Croſs, as an Executioner come to take away Pride and earthly mindedneſs, and ſenſuality, readily we will make the Croſs welcome. 4*ly*. Conſider the Croſs, as that which may promove our Glory; the more of the Croſs for Chriſt, the more eminent degrees of Glory; the more pleaſure in time, the more of torment after time. I will caſt up a word to you that ye have written, *Rev.* 18. 7. He is there ſpeaking of *Babylon*, the Mother of Fornications; and in the 7th verſe, ſaith, *How much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give her*. It was ſo in Gods dealing with *Dives*, when he came to the place of the damned. By the Law of contraries, how much of ſuffering, how much of grief and affliction for Chriſt, readily ſo much the more glory; and therefore in the ſame

Book

Book of the *Revelation*, though all that are in Glory, walk with white, yet they that were beheaded for the cauſe of Chriſt; are termed by *John*, to *walk in long white robes*; now, did we take up the Croſs of Chriſt under theſe four Conſiderations, it would never hinder us perſonally to Indenture with Chriſt: Did we take up the Croſs as a Teſtimony to the Goſpel, as an Evidence of our Adoption, as an Executioner to kill the corruptions we mourn over, and as a Preſage, that we will wear the long white robe, when we come to Glory: readily we will never ſtand at this, I will not enter into a perſonal Covenant, for I ſee what is the reſult of it, its the Croſs; but ſince theſe things are ſo, its a wonder rather, that we do not ſeek after it.

SERMON XVIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

THis duty of perſonal Covenanting with God, being ſo clear from this Text, that I need dwell no longer on it; I have brought the Point to exhort you to the practice of it, and removed three objections that ly in the way of it; that I may remove all the ſtumbling blocks that ly in the way, I will briefly run through other three. 1. Some may ſay, I cannot thus perſonally Covenant with Chriſt, for fear of the want of perſeverance, its a dreadful thing to be ay binding, and ay breaking. and its a great aggravation of our guilt, when we walk contrary to our Vows and Engagements to God, better not to bind, than break again. This Objection lies in the way of many; and for removing of it, I deſire you may take notice of theſe four things, 1. When the queſtion is about our duty, we are not to argue from events againſt our duty; it was excellently reaſoned in Queen *Eſther*, when ſhe was convinced, it was her duty to go to the King, and plead for her People the *Jews*, ſhe ſends word

word to *Mordecai I will go to the King, if I perish, I perish*; she will not bring an argument from the event, against her duty: if personal Covenanting with God be a duty, the argument taken from the event is very improper, when its brought against a duty. 2*ly*. I would have you to notice, that in reference to Perseverance, there are two kinds of Promises in the Covenant, 1. There are Promises made to perseverance. 2*ly*. There are Promises made of Perseverance; these two are diligently to be noticed: There are some Promises made to Perseverance, Heb. 3 6. *We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoycing of the hope, firm unto the end*; There are some Promises made of Perseverance, *I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me*. Now when we Covenant with God, we are diligently to eye both these kinds of Promises: There are Promises made to Faith, and Promises made of Faith, and if ye be staggered at this Covenanting with God, for fear ye do not persevere, remember that the Covenant contains Promises of Perseverance. 3*ly*. I would have you to notice, That as God in our Election, decreed our effectual Calling, so he decreed the reviving and quickning of Grace in us when it comes under decays, Psal. 23. *He restoreth my soul*. Ye find him, *Ezek* 34. Brought in *building up that which is broken, strengthning that which is weak*. He revives Grace, as well as quickens that which is dead: several times his People have fallen under decays, as a Tree in Winter that hath neither Leaves nor Flourishes; an evil time, and an erroneous Opinion, and a strong Temptation, may bring his People under decays, that they have no might to persevere, but he must bind up that which is broken, and restore it; so if they sit down and say, all these Sermons on personal Covenanting will not influence me to Covenant with him, for I will but bind and break, and play fast and loose with him, thou argues from events against a duty, thou should go to the King, even though thou should perish; and the Covenant thou binds now to, binds thee to Perseverance; and though there be decays in thy spiritual lot, yet he will bind that which is broken, and strengthen that which is weak, and restore the soul, and make a *David* Pen the 51 Psalm after he went in to *Bathsheba*.

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The fifth Objection against this way of personal Covenanting, is this; some readily stand at personal Covenanting with God, there are so many duties required in it, I must pray continually, I must rejoyce always, I must deny my self, I must not love the World; these are all Terms in the Covenant, and my heart will never subscribe to these; if the Covenant run on these Terms, is it not better for me, not to bind at all, than to do the thing my heart will not consent unto; if I contract with God on these Terms, I am like a man marrying a Woman that I do not love; for removing of this, I would have you to notice these three or four things. 1. As there are many duties required in the Covenant, so there is abundance of strength for obeying them; we have little more to do, than ask and have, nay, sometimes there is more given than we can ask; the Lord deals with many that use to go to him in Prayer, as *Naaman* did with *Gehazi*, when he ran after him, and said, *send my Master a talent, for he hath need of money, I pray thee, says he, be content, take two*; so the Father of the Prodigal did with his Son, when he returned, *make me, says he, as one of thy hired servants*; the Father says, *bring forth the best rob, and kill the fatted calf, put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet*; There is more offered in the Covenant, than we have an appetite to desire, and what need to scar at duty, when we bake beside meal, and have offered us in Christ, more than is required? 2*ly*. Take notice, though there be many duties required in the Covenant, yet duty is our greatest honour; the blessed Angels account so of it; they are thrice in the Bible called Angels, where they are once called Spirits; Angel is a name of Office, but Spirit is a name of nature, and they glory more to have their names recorded from their Duty, than from their Nature; there is no greater honour than Duty; now, to be scarred from personal Covenanting with God, when there is a talent, more nor required in the Covenant, and when Duty is our greatest honour, what an unreasonable exception were this, to stand at personal Covenanting! 3*ly*. Take notice, that the Duties ye bind to, in this personal Covenanting with God, ay the longer ye perform them, they will be the more easie and pleasant; its remarkable, *David*, a man exercised with performing Duties, *I had*

more

more joy in thy teſtimonies, than in all riches: if ſome men had been commanded to compare Riches and the Teſtimonies, they would have been far from giving *David* Teſtimony, *But he would meditat on his lawes day & night, he will riſe at midnight, and praiſe him, he will water his couch with teares, his ſore will run in the night*; when others were ſleeping, he was about the Tract of this Duty, and he came to this length, *I had more joy in thee, than in all riches*, the greateſt part of them that quarrel, and find no pleaſure in Duty are they that are not exerciſed with performing Duties; ſo we need not ſtand at perſonal Covenanting on this ſcore, that there are many Duties required; for not only do we bake beſide meal, and have ſtrength for performing Duties, but ay the longer we perform them, they are the ſweeter and eaſier. 4*ly*. Though we bind to the Terms and Duties of the Covenant, yet he with whom we bind will accept of uprightneſs in place of perfection; he will take the Will for the Deed, many a time hath he done ſo with his people; I have given you ſeveral Reaſons why he doth ſo, for he gets the full payment from Chriſt; if ye will accept Chriſt and his Righteouſneſs, he will do with you, as with a man coming to a Regiſter to get up a Bond, he deſires that the Bond may be given him, and that he may have it freely, in regard the Cautioner hath payed the full Sum; when we go to Covenant with him, we may plead he will accept of ſincerity in place of Perfection, the reaſon is, the Cautioner hath payed the full Sum.

The laſt and great Objection againſt this perſonal Covenanting, is, readily ſome may ſay, I cannot Covenant nor Indenture with him, for I ſuſpect if I do it, I ſhal do it Hypocritically, and I have been hearing, it muſt be a cordial ſerious work, and if I go and make a perſonal Covenant Hypocritically with him, he will break out on me with his wrath; it were better leaving it undone, than to do it hypocritically; do I not hear ſincerity indiſpenſibly required to it, and he will paſs by many things, before he paſs by Hypocriſie; and if I go and make a formal, heartleſs, and not an upright Covevenant with him, it were better leaving it undone, I confeſs, what it is they give the Hypocrite in this, I have determined in an Argument before, that all within the viſible

visible Church, are obliged personally to Covenant with him, they being bound to believe and to accept of the Gospel, as it is offered; yet in this case, it is difficult what to say, for since it is indispensibly required, and to go draw a personal Covenant, and subscribe it, and attest God and lift up the hand, and yet do it hypocritically, is it not better to leave it undone? Therefore I shal answer this in doing these three things. 1. By shewing you that there are some who will very boldly and confidently Covenant with God, and in effect, they are doing nothing but playing the hypocrite in it, and dissembling, they may bring many things to prove that they are not Hypocrites in it, and I would incounter two or three of them. 1. Say some, I am no Hypocrite, for I abhor Hypocrisie, I cannot endure it in another, and can I be guilty of the thing that I abhor? *Judah* was very severe against *Tamar* his Daughter in Law, when he heard she was with Child, *bring her forth*, says he, *and burn her*; *David* was very severe against the man that took his neighbours Lamb, when he had an hundred sheep of his own, *verily he shall die*, yet both of them were guilty of the Sin that they condemned. Divines observe, there may be several Motives that may make many condemn sin in others, that they approve in themselves. In the 2*d*. place, some will say, I am bold in affliction; *The sinners in Zion are afraid, and fear takes hold of the Hypocrite*, but I am not so, I am bold in affliction; this will not prove it either, for there is a *Roman* courage, a natural courage, that may be far from the Truth of Grace, ye have evidence of several in Scripture and History, who hath been so; but says some, I am much in secret Duty, I pray, I read the Scriptures; but Hypocrisie is like the *Egyptian Frogs* and *Caterpillars*, it will even be in our Bed-chambers; he that studies to pacifie his Conscience, and keep it quiet, will be much in secret duty; on that principle, thou may say I love not Drunkenness, nor Swearing, nor Whoring, I love not the Scandals my heart is inclined to, and therefore I am not an Hypocrite; but our Lusts are like the Sea, they ebb and flow, the Sea loses not its power of flowing, when its ebbing; there may be something restraining Lust, that yet hath not killed it, thou may taste of the powers of the Life to come, and yet be an Hypocrite

crite: ſo ſome may Covenant with God hypocritically, and on ſhallow grounds conclude themſelves no Hypocrite.

Secondly, Some ſtand at Covenanting with him, for fear of Hypocriſie, they are too lightly brought to conclude themſelves Hypocrites: and there are Two or Three things makes Believers to do ſo. 1. Says ſome, if God ſaw me not to be an Hypocrite, he would not toſs me and continue the Rod ſo long, nor hide himſelf from me under the Rod as he doth, this was the Argument *Job*'s Friends brought to prove him an Hypocrite, that God had continued the Rod with him; but this is no ground to prove thee an Hypocrite at all, thou could eaſilie anſwer this in the caſe of another, and by the way, its remarkable to ſee, how one Chriſtian will eaſily looſe another Chriſtians Doubts, that when the ſame Doubts occurs in their own caſe, they will be overwhelmed with them: thou knows affliction and ſincerity may go together, and though Affliction ly long on, and thou ly long in the Furnace, it may ſay, that thou has much Droſs, but thou art no Hypocrite. The Lord will do ſometimes with his People in afflictions, as Phyſicians do with their Patients, he will ſometimes give them Purges, and ſometimes give them Cordials; when thou art under the Croſs, its the time of thy Purging, but afterwards comes thy Cordials. Others ſays, they are Hypocrites, for they ſay, they are under decays, Grace grows and decays again, and muſt they not be Hypocrites, that are ſo? But every decay of Grace will not prove thee a Hypocrite, an Apple-tree may continue to be a Tree, though it have neither Apple nor Leaf on it; the beſt of Chriſtians have their Summer and Winter, Decays and Growings: So there may be great miſtakes, about Hypocriſie and Sincerity: ſome have obſerved it well, ordinarly Satan, who is a Liar and a Deceiver, tempts ordinarly, to things contrary to Truth, he will perſwade the Hypocrite, that he is ſincere, and on the contrair, he will perſwade the ſincere Chriſtian that he is a Hypocrite; therefore, if thou ſtand at perſonal Covenanting with God on that Score, that thou art a Hypocrite, and cannot Covenant with him, know that there is nothing more ordinary, than miſtakes about Hypocriſie and Sincerity, many concluding themſelves ſincere, that

God

God will ſend to Hell, and many concluding themſelves Hypocrites that are ſincere.

But Secondly, to make this matter clear and plain, it concerns thee to try in thy Covenanting with God, whether thou be ſincere and upright, and I will offer thee three Marks whereby to try it. 1. Sincerity where it is it aims at Perfection, it may be known by its aims; the ſame word in the *Hebrew* that ſignifies perfect, ſignifies ſincere, and ye will find them often convertible in Scripture, not only becauſe God accepts of Sincerity for Perfection, but Sincerity can never be ſatisfied, until it be perfect; therefore, ye find the moſt part of the exerciſes of the upright run on this, they cannot get Love enough, Faith enough, Repentance enough; for Sincerity will ay be complaining, until it be perfect, its reſembled by a Divine to a young Heir, that is never content though he have Meat and Cloath in the Houſe, until he get the whole Inheritance; for the mark of Sincerity is, that it is ay complaining, and humbled becauſe its not perfect. 2*ly*. Sincerity is diſcerned by ſomething in the nature of it, it takes in the Goſpel qualifications, it hath love to Chriſt, as the principle; it hath the glory of Chriſt, as its motive and end; Sincere, its *ſine cera*, without Wax; it has love to Chriſt as the principal Motive, and the glory of Chriſt, as the End of it, that it drives at; and where theſe two concur in our Covenanting with God, we may rationally conclude, that its not hypocritically done; if we find the love of Chriſt, and the glory of Chriſt, as the two Buts ſet up, the one from which the Arrow comes, the other to which the Arrow drives and if there be an aiming at perfection, that though we, cannot ſay, we perfectly love Chriſt, and believe in him; yet Sincerity will ay be complaining, until it come to Perfection; if thou find theſe two Characters of Sincerity, thou may conclude, thy Covenanting is not Formal and Hypocritical, but that its done in Uprightneſs and Sincerity. 3*ly*. I will ſay this, for removing this Doubt, ſuppoſe after all that is ſaid thou art unclear about Covenanting with him, for fear thou do it hypocritically, yet that ought not to hinder thee from perſonal Covenanting; and there are two Reaſons for confirming this. For 1. All that live under the Goſpel, they are bound to ac-

cept

cept of the Covenant, and that on the Terms offered now, ſuppoſe thou find not Sincerity in thy Covenanting, yet it takes not off the Obligation of the Command the Command binds thee, if thou be under the offer of the Goſpel, perſonally to Covenant under the hazard of the eternal wrath of God, whether thou be a Hypocrite or Sincere; therefore, thou art not to diſpute thy caſe ſo much as to underſtand the Command. 2*ly*. Take notice That there in is many their Indenturing with Chriſt, that at the firſt have many Selfiſh and Hypocritical like ends, that after they have Covenanted with him, have become ſincere; the caſe is, as with a Woman that at the firſt marries a Man becauſe he is rich, but afterward ſhe would not be divorced from him if he were begging; ſeveral times it comes to paſs, that at our firſt Indenturing with him, it will be ſome ſelfiſh end, that the Soul may drive at; but afterward, the Soul would not quite him and renounce him, and give him over, though they had nothing but his Croſs; ſo ye would not ſtand at that, I am not upright and ſincere, as becomes one that would Covenant with God, thou may have ſome ſelfiſh ends at the firſt, but like the woman that marries the man, becauſe he is rich, thou wouldeſt not now be divorced from him, but loves him for himſelf.

The *Second* thing I propoſed, in following this Exhortation, was, to ſhow you ſome Advantages that the Soul will have by this Perſonal Covenanting with him: I have hinted at ſome before, and before I give you the Marks of right perſonal Covenanting, I will tell you the Advantages, that are in perſonal Covenanting with him, and I will ſay theſe three or four Particulars to you. 1. All the good we are to expect from God, muſt come in to us through Jeſus Chriſt, without Him we could expect nothing from Him, but wrath and Hell, for we have broken the Covenant of Works, and He is infinitely juſt, he puniſhes ſin by a neceſſity of Nature; But add to this, 2*ly*. That all the things we can expect from Jeſus Chriſt, they muſt come in to us by the Covenant; what is the Ground that one has no benefit by Chriſt, he is to them *a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, and yet they will be broken on him?* And another they will get peace and pardon by Him? It comes in by

by the Covenant, they are concerned in the Covenant of Redemption, they are concerned in the Covenant of Grace ſo that as we can have no benefite by the Father, but by the Son, ſo we can have no benefite by the Son, except we be concerned in the Covenant. 3*ly*. We can expect no good from the Covenant, except we be particularly and perſonally concerned in the Covenant; what would it ſignify for *David* to ſay, *The Lord hath made with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, a Covenant*, if he be not able to ſay, the *Lord hath made with me a Covenant*? So laying theſe three together, *Firſt*, Being particularly concerned in the Covenant, all that is in God, and all that is in Chriſt, and all that is in the Covenant becomes ours: O! what a cooling is there in theſe three? I like the Obſervation that one has, on that Word that *David* often uſes, by vertue of this Covenant, O *my God, thou art my God*, ſays he, this Word, *my God*, takes in more, than all the Philoſophers in the World could draw out of it, if he had not explained it himſelf. *I am the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; Chriſt brings it in to prove the Reſurrection, for, ſays he, *I am not the God of the dead, but of the living*; but there is ſomething in that Word, *my God*, that no Logick can reach, all the Philoſophers on earth, could not have proven the Reſurrection out of that, if he had not done it; its a ſtrange Conſequence, *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob* will riſe, therefore the dead will riſe: now he that is particularly applying the Covenant, hath no leſs made over to Him, than *I will be thy God*. 4*ly*. A ſecond Advantage is, that a Believer may go, and plead the Promiſes of the Covenant; the mercy of God indeed is a ſweet Argument, but the Promiſes are a Debt to him; we may go, and as it were, lay his Hand-write before him, as ſome Antients, that went to pray in a particular place, they would lay the Bible before thm, and point out ſuch a Promiſe, and tell him what he had bound himſelf to; in how many caſes is it Advantageous, to have the promiſe to plead, when they have Covenanted with him? 1. Suppoſe thou go to God and plead for Bread, thou has a Family, and thou has Children, and all the toil and ſhift thou can make, cannot ſerve to get them Bread; the Promiſe is, *He remembred his Covenant*

and gave them Bread; ſuppoſe in another caſe, thou go to Him for Pardon, thou art exceeding guilty, its a ſtrange way, that they that have made a Covenant with him, will take in pleading for Pardon, Pſal. 25. *Pardon mine iniquity, for it is very great*: the Covenant will admit of the pardon of iniquity, they that have accepted the Covenant, and Indentured with him ſincerely, on the Terms of the Covenant; may go and ſeek pardon, for their iniquities are very great, for its like the Covenant. 3*ly*. A third Advantage, in time of Deſertion, ſuppoſe he be hiding himſelf, and thou cannot tell where he is, nor whither he is gone, the Covenant will influence his return; *She that was termed Forſaken, ſhall be ſo no more*; *I have forſaken thee for a little moment, but with everlaſting mercy will I gather thee, is not Zion married to Him, are not his walls continually before Him? and the mother may forget her ſucking child, but he cannot forget him*; what caſe is there, that we can go to him in Prayer, but conſtantly the Argument is taken from the Covenant; and thou that has ſincerely Indentured with him, thou may go as warrantably and plead the Promiſe, as he can command thee to thy Duty; though he be a Soveraign LORD, and thou a bit of clay, yet, ſince the Covenant hath made thee a Debtor to thy Duty, the ſame Covenant hath made him a Debtor to his promiſe; for as thou art bound to the one, he is graciouſly bound to the other, not that thou art to ſuſpend thy Duty, until he perform the Promiſe, but thou may preſs the Promiſe as much on him, as he may preſs thy Duty. 3*ly*, Thou may lay the Covenant for an excellent Ground, to caſt in the Anchor of Hope; without the Covenant, we might renounce our Hope; I know not what ground of hope we have, abſtracting from the Covenant, we need not, nor Hope never gets a ſurer Anchor, than the Covenant; And what an excellent look hath Hope, when one hath accepted the Covenant, to have all that God hath to give, and all the purchaſe of Chriſt, and all that is contained in the Covenant; May not thou take up thy hope to the top of Mount *Piſgah*, and let it ſee the promiſed Land that flows with Milk and Honey? And let it ſee the City with the twelve Ports, and twelve Foundations, and ſay, all theſe are mine? What an excellent help is it, in all ſtraits of the time,

time, when the time is that many will think that Popery will riſe, and thou may be put to deny Chriſt, or then to ſuffer for him? To be brief, this perſonal covenanting with God, hath ſo many advantages in it, that it is difficult to tell them all, but take theſe three, God makes over himſelf and all that he hath, his Son and all: Thou has the Covenant to plead with him, as he hath the Law to plead with thee; If he charge thee with the Law, and command, what thou in the Covenant has indentured to obey, then turn back the Promiſe on him, where he hath engaged to fulfil, what thou haſt covenanted; and if thou haſt ſincerely indentured with him in the Covenant, thou may take a view of the twelve Ports, & the City with the twelve Foundations, and ſay, my Father, and my Father's Houſe, and all is mine. If any ask, what is the ground of this? Ye have taken hold of the Covenant, and imbraced Chriſt; he hath made over himſelf in his Fulneſs, and the Righteouſneſs of his Son to thee, if thou wilt take hold of his Covenant: Therefore go home, if thou haſt the work of ſincere covenanting with him, thou may go gome, and take up for time and eternity, all things of abſolute neceſſity, and at length ſing, all is mine, and if any ask, what is thy Charter and Right? There it is, I have accepted him, and entered in a Covenant with him, and who can queſtion my Right to theſe.

SERMON XIX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my Houſe be not ſo with GOD; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

AFter I had removed many Objections, againſt this perſonal Covenanting, I came to preſs it, with the advantages that would follow on entering in a perſonal Covenant with God: I will now follow this a little, for it is very conducible and uſeful; In the preſſing of it, the gain will be great, all ye that love gain, follow this

way of perſonal covenanting with God; all ye that would be Rich and Great, and ſecure in both, enter in this perſonal Covenant with God; that I may the better preſs this, I would open to you ſome few Advantages that the Soul hath, that hath made a perſonal Covenant with God. *Firſt*, I ſhall give you two Generals, then four or five ſpecial and particular Advantages that ye will have by it.

Firſt, The two Generals ſhall be theſe, 1. By being in Covenant perſonally and particularly with God, all that is in God will be yours; *Micah* ſaid of his Idol, *Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* If ye have God, what would ye have more? It is very remarkable, *I will be thy God*, Gen. 17. was the Sum of the whole Covenant; So 1 *Cor.* 6. 16. *I will dwell among them, and walk among them, and I will be their God.* This is the thing that theſe that are in Covenant with him have, they have God, and all that is in God to be theirs; but becauſe this General will not ſufficiently open this Priviledge, I would have you to notice theſe three or four things that are in God, that if ye be particularly in Govenant with him, will be yours.

Firſt, All his Attributes will be yours, his Power, his Mercy, nay, his Holineſs and Juſtice will be yours; he will be Juſt to forgive, as *John* calls him; his Omnipotency, his Goodneſs, his Truth, and all his Attributes will be yours; and they will be yours in the ſame way that they are Chriſts: It is remarkable, when he ſent the Commiſſion to his Diſciples by *Mary*, he ſent on theſe Terms, *Go tell my Diſciples, I go to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*; he is yours in all his Attributes, when ye have to do with his Power, his Holineſs, his Goodneſs, if ye have made a perſonal Covenant with him, all his Attributes are yours. 2*ly*. All the Relations in which he is holden forth in the Covenant, are yours; He is your *Husband*, your *Father*, your *Hope*, your *Glory*; its remarkable, there are a number of Relations, cannot agree to the Angels: its true, he may be called their Creator and Maker, but he cannot be called their Husband, nor their Father, with a reference to the work of Redemption: So, if ye be in Covenant with him, as God is your God, ſo all his Attributes mentioned in the

the Covenant are yours, ye may call him your *Power*, your *Rock*, your *Husband*, your *Strength*, and your *Strong Tower*. 3*ly*, If he be yours, all his Diſpenſations are yours; *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things work together for good to them that love God*; all Providence, every thing, nay death it ſelf, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. *All things are yours, life or death, things preſent, or to come, all are yours, and Chriſt is Gods*; even death it ſelf is yours, when ever death comes, if ye be in Covenant with him, it comes like a Servant to attend you, and carry you home to the place of your Reſt; If he be yours, all his Attributes, and Relations, and Providences alſo are yours. *Laſtly*, If he be yours, there is ſomething that ye have, in having him, that no Miniſter nor Angel can tell, nor explain to you: The Truth is, if he be yours, the caſe is with you, as if a Country-man ſhould find a Jewel, and he ſhould go through all the Country, and let this Man and that Man ſee it, and aſk what it is worth, and there is none that can tell the Value of it, except one that is a Jeweller; Indeed Chriſt only can explain it, *Matth.* 22. I *am the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob*; He only can prove the Reſurrection from the dead, from that which no Miniſter nor Angel could do; There is no Miniſter nor Angel can tell, what is imported in this, *to have God for our God*: For all the Excellencies of the Creatures are imported in it, *Pſal.* 84. 11. *The Lord is a Sun and a Shield*: He is a Sun for Proſperity, and a Shield for Adverſity, he is both for Proſperity and Adverſity; The Man can never fall wrong, that is in Covenant with God, under no Croſs will he be broken, under no Proſperity will he be blown up; So ye that enter in a perſonal Covenant with him, ye will have God to be your God, and if he be your God, all his Attributes, all his Relations are yours, all his Providences will make for you, and when ye have counted on all the three, ye have ſomewhat in this *my God*, that no Miniſter nor Angel can explain, and that is the firſt Advantage I offer, by perſonal Covenanting with God, will be yours.

Secondly, By perſonal Covenanting and Indenturing with him, all Chriſt's Purchaſe will be yours, great things hath he purchaſed, and readily he hath purchaſed no more, than he hath payed for; He hath abundantly payed for all that he hath gotten; Nay, to ſay the Truth, he hath payed above the Value, to give his Blood for the like of us; And

for the Glory that he hath now in Heaven, he had as much before, though not properly as Mediator, yet as God Eſſential and Conſubſtantial with the Father. Now, all that he hath purchaſed is yours. For clearing this, I will offer you two things to be conſidered, 1. The Covenant of Grace on Chriſts part is no more, but the execution of his three Offices, as he is King, Prieſt, and Prophet of his Church; all the Promiſes of the Covenant may be reduced to theſe three, all the Promiſes of Pardon are the execution of his Prieſtly Office; All the Promiſes of Guiding and Ruling, are the execution of his Kingly Office; All the Promiſes of Teaching are the execution of his Prophetical Office: The Truth is, the whole Covenant is nothing, but the Execution of his three Offices, for he is left only Executor in the New Teſtament; He was both the Teſtator, and he is Executor, and muſt fulfil the Legacies left in the Covenant. Now, he that hath made a perſonal Covenant with him, he hath a Right and Title to all his Offices, and conſequently to all that he hath purchaſed; They may not only count on God as their God, but on the Mediator's Purchaſe as their Purchaſe. 2*ly*, Another thing will evidence the Truth of this, in regard of all things that Chriſt hath purchaſed, they are all Secured and Ratified by the Covenant; Ye have often heard, that God cannot give a greater Security to Men, than the Security he makes by way of Covenant; Now, they that have made a perſonal Covenant with God, they have Security in the Covenant for all Chriſt's purchaſe; Now theſe are Advantages abundantly ſufficient, to bind you to this perſonal Covenanting. But to follow this more particularly, I would have you to take up the Covenant under a Four-fold Formality, and the taking it up under a Four-fold Formality, will let you ſee more of the Advantage of perſonal Covenanting with God. *Firſt*, Conſider the Covenant as the Conduit, I ſay, not the Fountain, but as the Conduit and Channel of all Sanctifying Grace, through which runs from the Fountain of Grace all Sanctifying Grace. 2*ly*, Conſider the Covenant as it is an Anſwer to all Challenges and Objections. 3*ly*, Conſider the Covenant, as it is a Charter and Security for the Church of God in general. *Laſtly*, Conſider the Covenant, as the Charter of our Inheritance, for all Eternity; and under theſe four Formalities, ye may ſee the Advantages that

perſon hath, who enters in a perſonal Covenant, and takes *this* everlaſting Covenant, and applys it to himſelf.

Firſt, Conſider the Covenant, as the Conduit through which all the Graces runs to us from Chriſt, all Graces runs through the Channel of a Covenant; it is true Chriſt is the Fountain of Grace, *and of his fulneſs we receive, and Grace for Grace*; But all the Graces that comes from Chriſt comes to us from this Promiſe: It is remarkable, there is no Grace, whether it be the firſt Grace, *I will take away the heart of ſtone, and I will put my fear in their heart*, or whether it be the Grace that is built on theſe firſt Graces, they are holden out to us in the Covenant; the Grace of Effectual Calling, the Grace of Sanctification, Adoption, and Pardoning Grace; the Conduit that convoyes them all, is the Covenant: The Truth is, we can lippen for nothing, for as excellent as Chriſt is, (and O! but he be excellent and good) we can lippen for nothing but covenanted Things from him; Faith can go no higher than the Covenant, there is indeed ſome that have written, that he will be better at the great Day than his Word, I will not go to contradict them, I know no Scripture that will contradict them, but I know no ground for Faith to expect any thing from him, but according to his Word: We can lippen for no more, nor Faith can warrantably expect for no more than what he hath promiſed. So all Grace, the Conduit and Channel through which it runs to us, is the Covenant; So he that hath made a perſonal Covenant with God, hath in effect laid the pipe to the mouth, through which the water that comes out of the Fountain is convoyed: All the Graces of the Spirit are promiſed, I know no Grace, but it is promiſed in the Covenant by God; He that hath made a Covenant with God, however Chriſt be the Fountain of Grace, the Covenant is the Conduit and Spout through which they all run to thee; and thou that makes a perſonal Covenant with God, layes thy mouth to the pipe, and waits until the Fountain of Grace ſpring Grace to thee; thou art in a fair way to get a new heart, and the pardon of the ſins of thy youth, to get love to God, and patience and delight in God, for thou art entered in a Covenant that carries all theſe things from God the Fountain of Grace.

Secondly,

for the Glory that he hath now in Heaven, he had as much before, though not properly as Mediator, yet as God Eſſential and Conſubſtantial with the Father, Now, all that he hath purchaſed is yours. For clearing this, I will offer you two things to be conſidered, 1. The Covenant of Grace on Chriſts part is no more, but the execution of his three Offices, as he is King, Prieſt, and Prophet of his Church; all the Promiſes of the Covenant may be reduced to theſe three, all the Promiſes of Pardon are the execution of his Prieſtly Office; All the Promiſes of Guiding and Ruling, are the execution of his Kingly Office; All the Promiſes of Teaching are the execution of his Prophetical Office: The Truth is, the whole Covenant is nothing, but the Execution of his three Offices, for he is left only Executor in the New Teſtament; He was both the Teſtator, and he is Executor, and muſt fulfil the Legacies left in the Covenant. Now, he that hath made a perſonal Covenant with him, he hath a Right and Title to all his Offices, and conſequently to all that he hath purchaſed; They may not only count on God as their God, but on the Mediator's Purchaſe as their Purchaſe. 2*ly*, Another thing will evidence the Truth of this, in regard of all things that Chriſt hath purchaſed, they are all Secured and Ratified by the Covenant; Ye have often heard, that God cannot give a greater Security to Men, than the Security he makes by way of Covenant; Now, they that have made a perſonal Covenant with God, they have Security in the Covenant, for all Chriſt's purchaſe; Now theſe are Advantages abundantly ſufficient, to bind you to this perſonal Covenanting. But to follow this more particularly, I would have you to take up the Covenant under a Four-fold Formality, and the taking it up under a Four-fold Formality, will let you ſee more of the Advantage of perſonal Covenanting with God. *Firſt*, Conſider the Covenant as the Conduit, I ſay, not the Fountain, but as the Conduit and Channel of all Sanctifying Grace, through which runs from the Fountain of Grace, all Sanctifying Grace. 2*ly*, Conſider the Covenant as it is an Anſwer to all Challenges and Objections. 3*ly*, Conſider the Covenant, as it is a Charter and Security for the Church of God in general. *Laſtly*, Conſider the Covenant, as the Charter of our Inheritance, for all Eternity; and under theſe four Formalities, ye may ſee the Advantages that a perſon

perſon hath, who enters in a perſonal Covenant, and takes *this* everlaſting Covenant, and applys it to himſelf.

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3*ly*, Take the Covenant as a Charter for the Church of God

God and in reference to this, I would have you notice three or four things. 1. In the Covenant, we find not only the particular Caſes of Believers, their Pardon, and their taking away the heart of ſtone, but there are greater things promiſed to the Church, that are not yet accompliſhed; the *Millenaries*, an antient Sect, as antient as the Apoſtles time, when they read through theſe Propheſies, they thought that Chriſt would come, and receive them perſonally on earth a thouſand years, and the fifth Monarchy Men have run in ſo many fancies about them; but there are great things propheſied, concerning the Church, that are not yet accompliſhed, *That all the earth ſhall be full of the glory of the Lord, and Jeruſalem ſhall again be inhabited, and holineſs ſhall be written on horſes bells*; The meaning of the place is, that the people ſhall be moſtly taken up about holineſs, and denyed to their vanities; The Generation is coming, that will ſee theſe days, theſe great things that are in the Covenant: And the Truth is, theſe things are far greater, than our particular; our pardon and our peace, is nothing to the caſe of the Church of God. 2*ly*, I would have you notice, that he that enters in a perſonal Covenant with God, as I have often told you, he is to take in the caſe of the Church of God, as well as his own particular, he is to take in, that he will mind the caſe of the Church, and ſay, Lord, I will believe all the Promiſes concerning the Church, I will accept theſe promiſes, and I will rely on the faithfulneſs of him that made them; and though I be laid in the grave, I expect there is a Generation coming, that will ſee all theſe things: I deny not, but we ſhould look to our Mother Church, whereof we are Members, but withal, we ought to take in the caſe of the whole Church, in our perſonal Covenanting with God, ſince the Covenant runs ſo much on the caſe of the Church; it is a ſtrange Covenant that he will make, that will ſeclude the caſe of the Church of God, and ſince he hath made ſo much mention of it in the Everlaſting Covenant, what kind of Covenant is that thou wilt make, that will ſeclude the caſe of the Church of God? So we are to take in this, Lord, I will be an enemy to the error and profanity of the time. I will neither be led away with the giddineſs, nor the drunkenneſs, nor profanity of the time; the

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the Covenant is for Truth and Godlineſs, and therefore thou can Covenant againſt deluſion and profanity: And here a great advantage he hath, that enters in a perſonal Covenant with God, in backſliding times, when the wicked are counted happy, & they that work unrighteouſneſs are ſet up, and when there is ſuch a current of prophanity; and, as *Zacharias* ſays, *The beſt are as briers and thorns*, when there are few young ones brought in to Chriſt, and when they who are brought in we know not what they may turn to, for many turns away to Error; he that hath entered in a perſonal Covenant with God, he is ſecure; for though he ſee not theſe days, yet, as *Abraham* ſaw Chriſt's days a far off, ye may ſee them a far off. O! but it is comfortable to remember, that there will a Generation come, when thou art laid in thy grave, *That will have holineſs written on the horſes bells, and that all will be taught of God, from the meaneſt to the greateſt, and there ſhall be one fold, and one ſhepherd: and the vail will be taken down betwixt them.* 3*ly*, He that enters in a perſonal Covenant with God, he hath this Encouragement, the Covenant takes in the healing of Diviſions among his people; It is remarkable, it is often promiſed, it is true, it is long in fulfilling, *I will give them one way, and one heart, and they ſhall be as one ſtick in my hand*, the time of the fulfilling the Promiſes is not yet come: No, almoſt as many Heads, as many Opinions: In a time of Liberty, it would be difficult for a beginner, how to fix, there are ſuch varieties of Opinions, no wonder the prophane multitude skunner at all Profeſſion: But he that hath made a perſonal Covenant with God, he knows the Covenant carries this in the boſom of it, *They ſhall be as one ſtick in my hand*; theſe days are coming though we wait on; Now, in the perſonal Covenant, he that hath Indentured with God, and given him the hand, however ye may ſee, that there are ſcarce three parts of nineteen parts of the World Chriſtians, and among theſe three parts, but few Proteſtants, yet he that enters in a perſonal Covenant with God, hath this, that he may go and ſing, *All the earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of God*, and when theſe days are come, *they will be like one ſtick in his hand, and they will have one heart, one mind, and one way*: And we may rejoyce as *Abraham* did, to ſee Chriſt's days a far off: Now,

now he that enters in a perſonal Covenant with God, conſiders the Covenant, as the conduit of all Grace, and the immediat anſwer to all Challenges, and a Charter for the Church of God when the earth will be full of the knowledge of God, and when they will be like one ſtick in his hand, and when they will have one heart, and one way, and will not be ſaying, here is Chriſt, and there is Chriſt: for that is now accompliſhed in our time, there is one ſaying. Here is Chriſt, and there is Chriſt, and one knows not where to ſet down their ſteps, there is ſuch a variety of Opinions, and a multitude of Diviſions. *Laſtly*. Take up the Covenant, as the Charter of the Inheritance, and ye will ſee what advantage he hath, that hath made a particular Covenant with God: all the glory to come is his, O! but the Covenant ſpeaks excellently of the Inheritance, take the twenty one and twenty two Chapters of the Book of the *Revelation*, and read them over, what a ſtately City is there: what ſtately Foundations, what Porches? and what Trees, that bears twelve manner of Fruits, every month, and the Leaves of them are for the healing of the Nations? He that hath entered ſeriouſly in Covenant with God, according to the qualifications I ſpoke of before, the Covenant carries him with a Legal Right to all that City, let it never have ſuch Foundations and Porches, all the Porches, Trees and Foundations in it, are all his; Nay, the Tree that is in the midſt of *Paradiſe*, that bears the twelve manner of Fruits, is his Now, ſee what a priviledge it is, to enter in a perſonal Covenant with God. Now take up all theſe advantages, and I have laid this before you, if not to perſwade you, yet to make you inexcuſable, and to help to bring your Blood upon your own head, if ye enter not in a perſonal Covenant; But,

Thirdly, After I have removed the impediments, and ſhewed the advantages, there is a third thing in following this *Uſe* of Exhortation; it ſhall be in exhorting you, to enter in this perſonal Covenant; conſider a little the perſons that are admitted to perſonal Covenanting with God, and generally practick Divines do it, that write of the Covenant; the perſons that are admitted, may be a great motive, to preſs this Uſe of Exhortation, if he had ſtood at Kings, Princes, the great Ones of the Earth,

the Wiſe, the Learned, the Holy, and Righteous, and theſe that are exact, according to the Covenant of Works; but ye would notice four or five things, in the perſons that are called perſonally to Covenant with God, and take up this as the great incitment topreſs this perſonal Covenanting in you 1. That no former guiltineſs may hinder you from entering in this perſonal Covenant, nay, I ſay more, the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt cannot hinder; for if a perſon could conſent to accept of Chriſt, it would not be that ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; therefore its remarkable, they have entered in a perſonal Covenant with him, that have been the greateſt of ſinners, they have had ſeven Devils, like *Mary Magdalen*, there have been ſome Blaſphemers, like *Paul*; ſome that have killed the *Prophets*, and ſtoned them; ſome that were Perſecutors like *Manaſſeh*, as thoſe that are mentioned in the *Hebrews*, that were ſawn aſunder, of whom it was reported, that he did ſaw *Iſaiah* aſunder, with a timber Saw, yet when he was in Bonds in *Babylon*, he repented, and found mercy. That is one thing in regard of the perſons. 2*ly*. In entering in this perſonal Covenant, he ſtands not at how mean a birth and parentage perſons be; its remarkable, *Abraham* with whom he firſt made a Covenant, *a Syrian* to thy Father, and thy Mother an *Amorite*; *Moſes*, he had his name *Moſes*, that is drawn out, becauſe he was drawn out among the Flags, he was in a manner a Fundling, he is found lying among the Flags by *Pharoahs* Daughter, no, he ſtands not at that, but can enter in a Covenant with a *Moſes*, though he be drawn out. 3*ly*. He ſtands not at the weakneſs of Parts, let one be never ſo ſimple, He ſtands not at that, the twelve Apoſtles are called oft ἰδιῶται, our Tranſlation, for reſpect to them, hath it *unlearned* Men, when they perceive them to be unlearned men, in the Original, they were but poor fiſher men, but that ſtood not in the way of it. He ſtands not at the weakneſs of Faith, if he come to make a perſonal Covenant, he neither ſtands at former guiltineſs, nor the meanneſs of birth, if thou were even a *Lazarus*, laid full of Boils at *Dives* gate; nor at the meaneſt of Parts, nay, nor at the weakneſs of Faith. And *Laſtly*, He ſtands not at the mixture of Faith with Corruption, though thou can ſay, *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief*; he is like a man, that if one ſhould ask

ask him? Is it day, he cannot tell, whether it be day or night, he cannot tell whether his Faith be Faith or Unbelief. Now in entering in a perſonal Covenant with God, God will ſtand at none of theſe, lay all theſe together, and I hope I may cloſe this Uſe of Exhortation, exhorting you all, to take this gate of it, enter in a perſonal Covenant with God, and ſay, and ſubſcribe it with your hand; if ye have not done it, go and do it; ye ſhould be exhorting your own Soul to it, and your neighbours, ye that have Children, ſhould be preſſing them to do it, Husbands ſhould be ſaying to their Wives, come let us return to the Lord, come and let us enter in a perſonal Covenant with him, they that have ſitten all theſe Sermons, and have not advanced one ſtep, I am afraid they be the Tree, of which it is ſaid, *Never fruit grow on thee henceforth.* Ye are daily dying, and going off this Stage, therefore be exhorted, to take you to this perſonal Covenant.

SERMON XX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

I Have ſpoken to Two *Uſes* of this Doctrine of perſonal Covenanting with God, one of Inſtruction, which conſiſted of five or ſix Branches; another of Exhortation, which hath been preſt in ſeveral Sermons, by removing the impediments, and conſidering the Advantages of perſonal Covenanting. The third Uſe might be of Tryal whether we have perſonally Covenanted with God, or not; but ſince this will come in, in the Third Doctrine of this Branch of the *verſe*, *David's* aſſerting, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, I will refer the marks of perſonal Covenanting, untill I handle that Branch of the *verſe*. I purpoſe this Afternoon, to cloſe this Head of perſonal Covenanting, though it will occur often in handling this *verſe*, afterwards. I will ſhut it up, with an Uſe of Direction.

Uſe

Uſe 3. For the right management of this Work of perſonal Covenanting with God, I have proven the neceſſity of it, opened the Nature and Properties of it, and have cleared many Queſtions about it: Now the Key and Kernel of Direction follows to be handled; and that I may do it the more diſtinctly and clearly, I will follow it to four ſorts of Perſons, which will readily take up the ſubſtance of this afternoons Sermon.

Firſt, Is it a Duty thus perſonally, and particularly to Covenant with God, then it ſpeaks a word to theſe, who have hitherto neglected, or it may be, are ſtill averſe from this Duty; they can count on many things that have occured in the Wilderneſs to them, but never of a perſonal Covenanting with God. I have ſpoken ſomewhat to this ſort of people before, and may be the ſhorter now, I ſhall only name theſe four things to them, 1. It is already proven, to be a Duty of abſolute neceſſity, the Saints of old have practiſed it, if we believe particular Election, and particular Redemption, and that we ſtand bound perſonally to the Duties of the Covenant, that we perſonally and particularly claim the priviledges of the Covenant, we ſtand obliged, of abſolute neceſſity, perſonally and particularly to Covenant to them. I think I have on ſolid Goſpel Principles proved, that there can be no benefit by Chriſt, without particular Covenanting with him; thou owns not thy Baptiſm, thou goes raſhly about the Sacrament of the Supper, if thou do not particularly and perſonally Indenture with God. I exhort thee to conſider theſe grounds, who has never dreamed of this duty; all that is in Chriſt, all that is in the Covenant, all that is in the Father, they ſignifie nothing to thee, without a perſonal and particular Covenanting with him. 2*ly*. I would exhort thee, that has never done it, to conſider the wretchedneſs and miſery of the Covenant that thou art under, untill thou particularly Covenant with Chriſt, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace; thou art under the Covenant of Works, Doſt thou hear? This is a Covenant that admits not of a Cautioner, nor of Repentance, that will not diſpenſe with the ſmalleſt Tranſgreſſion, nor admits not of Sincecerity, however thou talk of Chriſt and of Repentance, if thou has not made a particular Covenant with God

according

according to the Terms of the Covenant of Grace, thou art under the Covenant that admits not of a Chriſt, Repentance, and Sincerity. 3*ly*. Thou that has not made this perſonal Covenant, and particularly Indentured, either by word, or ſubſcribing, or lifting up the hand to God, I would have thee conſidering, that there is in thy Lot, ſomewhat that is worſe, than the caſe of Heathens; they have no Relation of a Covenant of Grace, they will not be comptable for the thing that never was revealed, *Tyrus and Sidon, Sodom, and Gomorrah, the men of Nineveh, will riſe in Judgment againſt thee, for at the preaching of Jonah, they repented:* But thou that lives under the drop of the Goſpel, and hears of a particular and perſonal Indenturing with God, thou ſhall have them coming from the Eaſt, and the Weſt, at the great Day, and they ſhall all be Witneſſes againſt thee, for at the preaching of *Jonah Nineveh* repented, and thou haſt this Covenant preſſed on thee by the Goſpel, yet thou doſt not repent, nor make this perſonal Covenant. 4*ly*. I would have thee to conſider, that if thou be not in a particular perſonal Covenant with God, thou can lay no claim to the Covenant at all, *Thou art an alien to the common wealth of Iſrael, and a ſtranger to the covenant of promiſe*; we muſt either be particularly intereſted in it, or not at all, it muſt have our ſeveral conſents, or we have no claim to it; thou that has never made this perſonal Covenant with him, and yet art living under the drop of the Goſpel, thou art neglecting a Duty of abſolute neceſſity, thou owns not thy Baptiſm, thou can plead no benefit by the Covenant. if all theſe things will not move thee, I know not what will do it: if thou ſit them out, thou art like to be the Tree on which fruit never will grow, thou may be fewel for burning, but not for bearing; and I am afraid there are many ſo that are ſtanding in the Vineyard, and are Trees for burning, but not for bearing.

Secondly, This way of perſonal Covenanting ſpeaks a word to a ſecond ſort of perſons, and that is to thoſe, who come ſome length, but they ſtick in the Birth, and never come up to the full length in this Act of particular and perſonal Covenanting with God: There are a great many that do ſo, we have a number of ſober Civilians; ſome Divines that write of perſonal Covenanting, they

ſay,

ſay, its the lot of many Perſons of Quality, they go ſome length in Covenanting, but they go not the full length, readily they forſake the pollutions of the World, but comes not the length of giving themſelves over to him according to the Covenant of Grace, in their lot, and ſervice, and condition in the World. I would have ſuch conſidering, for there are many, that ſit down betwixt Towns, betwixt Heaven and Hell: I would have them conſidering three or four things. (1.) Thou art in danger to loſe two Worlds: If thou take this preſent World, for thy happineſs, why fulfils not thou thy luſts in it? If thou take the World to come for thy Portion, why walks thou not ſuitable to thy Hope? Its a lamentable thing, many they will find, they loſe both Heaven and Earth, they have been denied to the pleaſures of the Fleſh, and yet for not going a greater length, they have loſt Heaven alſo, often Hypocrites do ſo, and the generality of ſober Civilians, that comes not up the length the Goſpel calls for, but comes ſome length, they are like to loſe both this World, and that which is to come. (2*ly*.) I would have thee conſidering, thou that comes ſome length, that there are many, who have been almoſt Chriſtians, that have all their life ſtuck at that *Almoſt*, and have eternally periſhed in it; the famous *Agrippa*, a friend of *Auguſtus*, could tell *Paul*, thou almoſt perſwades me to be a Chriſtian, would to God ſays he, not only *almoſt*, but *altogether* thou were ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds. I will recommend thee to a Book on that Text, *The Almoſt Chriſtian*, many of you have need of that, what does it ſignifie to be almoſt, and not altogether one? Thou had as good renounce it altogether, as to be almoſt, and not altogether a Chriſtian. (3*ly*) Conſider thou that comes ſome length, in this perſonal Covenanting, what a fooliſh bargain haſt thou made with Chriſt, to agree with him in many Articles, and to be content to pay many things, and to break off the bargain for a peny: its a buſineſs of a Heaven and of a Hell, and thou that would make a Covenant with him, I ſhall not be a Drunkard, I ſhall not be a Swearer, I ſhal wait on the Ordinances, I ſhall pray in ſecret, and in my Family; but for the inward Luſts of my heart, and ſecret walk with God, I dare not Covenant for that; there thou has

offered

offered fair for Heaven, and art like to loſe it for a little, he that is the Author of the Practice of Piety, he brings in many, that are in Hell, ſaying, O but I was near Heaven, and did many things, and ſuffered many things for him, and yet I am here; that agredges their Torment and Miſery. Readily, thou may have gone a great length, yet it may be, it encourages thy blaſphemy againſt him, in the place of the damned, that thou has done many things, and ſuffered many things, and yet one thing is lacking. *4ly.* I would have thee conſider, that thou that art ſitten down in an *Almoſt*, on this Motive, that thou readily thinks at Death, or ſome period of Time, or another, thou will come to do it *Altogether*; Thou would know, if thou ſit ſuch a Sermon on it, as this, it ſhall be denied to thee at Death, if thou ſit this afternoon, and not reſolve, to take him on the Terms he offers himſelf; if thou willfuly harden thy ſelf againſt all theſe things, thou ſhalt have enough to do, to wreſtle with the Fever, when it comes, thou may be roving, and loſe the Compoſure of thy Spirit, and the thing thou wilt not do now, ſhall be denied thee then; Therefore, thou that art come up almoſt to do it, I have removed the Objections out of thy way, know, if thou hope to do it afterwards, and will not do it now, in the day of thy diſtreſs, or at Death, it ſhall be denied to thee, and thou ſhalt die either Roving, or Sleeping, or Stupid, and ſhall be laid in the Grave like a Sheep: Therefore whoever has come up almoſt to Covenant, but not altogether, but hopes, there will come a better day afterwards. Remember if thou refuſe it this Night, and go not home thus to Indenture with him, on the Terms you have heard, belike Roving, Stupidity, or Preſumption will deprive thee of it when thou art lying on the Bed of languiſhing.

Thirdly, Is it a Duty thus perſonally to Covenant with God, then it ſpeaks a word to them, who have done it, and broken again; They find they have a heart ſo ſlippery, that it will bind the day, and break the morrow: unto theſe I would ſay three or four things. 1. Thou that haſt Indentured and broken, I would inform thee, that ay when we break, God does not break, it would never be called an Everlaſting Covenant, if it

had only a reference to us; it might be called an Hourly Covenant, a Daily Covenant, a Diurnal kind of a Covenant, but not an Everlasting Covenant; The thing that makes it be called an Everlasting Covenant is, the Everlasting Faithfulness of God, it is so contrived, as tho we break, if we believe not, yet he abides Faithful; now, when he enters in a Marriage Covenant, the Contract is not like the Clause of the Marriage, betwixt a Man and a Woman, if one of the Parties commit Adultery, the Law provides a Divorce, *Thou hast played the Harlot with many lovers, yet return to me, for I am married to thee.* 2*ly*. I would have thee, that has Covenanted with God and broken, to mind, that in the Covenant there are Promises of Reviving, Renewing, Restoring, and of binding up that which is broken, and strengthening that which is weak, it would never have been Everlasting, if there were not such Articles in it; So that if thou has broken, thou art not to run from the Covenant, but thou art to make thee to such Promises of it, as concern thy Case; all the Promises relating to Reviving, Restoring, Renewing, healing that which is broken, and strengthening that which is weak, its a great failing in many precious to God, when they find they have made a Covenant, and broken it, they resolve to make no mo, but altogether give it over; In that case they are to go, and seek out such promises, as relate to Restoring, Reviving, Renewing, binding up that which is broken, and strengthening that which is weak, otherways the Covenant could never be an Everlasting Covenant. 3*ly*. I exhort thee, who has broken, to go mournfully, and plead the Promises; if thou do it presumptuously, its like thou has no Claim to these Promises; there are many when they fall, they presently talk of Christ, and of the Covenant, and before ever the Plaister be applyed, the Sore is heal; the Plaister of Reviving Grace, nothing makes it stick better to, nor Tears. If thou shalt go and take the Plaister, and apply it to the breach of the Covenant, and not mingle in Tears with it, the Plaister will not stick, there is nothing that makes it stick so well, as Tears flowing from a contrite heart, Therefore, thou that has broken Covenant with him, and are guilty of this sin which many of the generation are

guilty

guilty of, thou haſt Indentured with him, and dealt deceitfully in his Covenant; go and apply theſe Promiſes of the Covenant of Reviving, Reſtoring, Renewing, and binding up; but know, that nothing will make the Plaiſter ſtick ſo well to, as Tears; if thou do it preſumptuouſly thou may apply the Plaiſter, but in a moment it will fall off. 4. Thou that has broken Covenant with him, and Indentured, and art afraid to hazard again, know this, that burnt Bairns fire dreads, the thing that occaſioned the breach of Covenant, eſchew that; I will offer you two or three things, that uſes ordinarly to bring perſons, that uſes to Covenant with God, under a breach of Covenant. 1. Ordinarly overly and careleſs performance of ſecret Duties; thou goes to God, and its words without Life or Spirit, that thou vents to God in prayer, thou will ſoon break all thy Vows if there grow a dryneſs betwixt the Root and the Branches, the Branches will ſoon wither: Its remarkable, that which *Elihu* ſaid to *Job*, he was miſtaken in *Job*, but the word he ſpake was true, had it not been applyed to *Jobs* caſe, he thought *Job* ſpoke unreverently of God, and he took him for an Hypocrite, and he thought all his Arguments reflected on God, and when he heard him out, ſurely ſays he, *Thou reſtraineſt Prayer, and caſteſt off fear*, his meaning is, therefore thou may ſay any thing thou thinks, overly performing of Prayer, will ſoon bring one to break all their Vows. 2*ly*. Its given by ſome Divines, as one of the Reaſons of breaking Covenant with God, unprofitable Converſe among Chriſtians, every Chriſtian meeting with another, ſhould be like a man going to light a Candle in another mans houſe, where he knows there is a fire, when we uſe to converſe together, there is nothing of God in it, nothing of Chriſts Death, and Sufferings; readily we may grow careleſs of our Covenants with God, its a great fault among many, I know not whether it be Ignorance, or the want of matter within, that occaſions it, if one ſhould begin a ſpiritual Subject, they will give it no kind of Intertainment, but ſilence, they will ſit graver poſſibly at that time, than at another, and hear, but they give it no kind of Anſwer; thou art refuſing to light thy Candle at thy Neighbours fire, and readily thou wilt break thy Co-

venant with God. To be brief, I exhort thee who has broken thy Covenant, to take the Promiſes of Reviving, Renewing, Reſtoring, and of healing that which is broken, ſtrengthening that which is weak, and lay them to the ſore, with the Tear in thine Eye, for nothing will make the Plaiſter ſtick ſo well, as Tears mingled with a contrite heart.

The laſt ſort of perſons, to whom I will ſpeak, and therewith cloſe with this Theme, and it is to thoſe, that has Covenanted with him, they have made a Covenant with him by Sacrifice, and would gladly know ſome Advice how to keep it, that they be not guilty of the ſins, abounding in their time, of being breakers of Covenant with him, that I may not let thee go, without ſome word of Advice who are ſerious, how thou ſhall get it keeped, I ſhall for preſent give thee theſe two words of Advice, Firſt, If thou would keep this Covenant with God, look well to thy Conſcience. 2*ly*. Look well to thy Converſation.

Firſt, If thou would keep this Covenant with God, look well to thy Conſcience, its Gods Deputy within thee, and the immediat Judge of all thy Actions; and here I would ſhew you, that a Man looks well to his Conſcience, when he looks to theſe three things in it; 1. When he looks to have his Conſcience well informed, the Conſcience is a blind Guide, its the Candle of the word that muſt regulat it, therefore ye will find a conſcientious Chriſtian, he is always waiting on the Word, waiting on the Sermons, and propoſing Doubts; and the great Reaſon of all is, to get the Conſcience well informed; therefore if the Conſcience be blind, and decline to Error, as often it will do, it will ſometimes call the thing a Duty, that God calls Sin, and that Sin which God calls Duty; therefore, if thou would keep Covenant with God, look well to thy Conſcience, that it be well informed, and regulat by the word of Truth, that thou make not a Duty when there is none. In this time I am afraid, many are taken away from their Obligations to him through an ill informed Conſcience; Conſcience may err on the right hand, there are many make moe Duties than God hath made, it may make that Duty which God has never made one; It may err on the left hand,

hand, by presuming on duty, and prostituting duties to Lusts, and if thou have not a well informed Conscience, all thy running through the wilderness is to no purpose. I believe all Papists, Turks and Quakers out-strip us, there are no persons takes less pains to come to Heaven, than Protestants, therefore, if thou would keep thy Covenant with God, in such a time, when there are some saying, Here is Christ, and there is Christ, and many falling unto Errours, both on the right hand, and on the left hand, labour to have thy Conscience well informed. 2*ly*. Look to thy conscience in this that it be kept tender, all the light in thy conscience will not keep thy Vows and Covenants to God, if it be not keeped tender; Its a singular Character of *Josiah*'s sincerity that he weeped, when he heard the Book of the Law read; *Huldah* the Propheteſs sent him word, *because thy heart was tender*, if thou would look well to thy conscience, look well that it be well informed, and then that it be tender: there are some ye may drive Carts and Wains over their consciences, they will not crack, and of all Plagues this is the greatest. 3*ly*. Hearken to the voice of thy conscience, do not sit it out, when conscience presses on thee. *Amesius* in his cases of conscience, says, *He that resists his Conscience, or what he takes to be the mind of God in the Conscience, he resists God, because it is the mind of God, for he takes it up as the mind of God, in such a time*; No man ought to follow another mans Light, but to follow the Dictats of his owo conscience; many are like the old Prophet and the young, the young Prophet comes to *Bethel*, and denounces woes against it; the Lord said, *See thou turn not aside to the right hand or to the left hand, to eat or drink*; The old Prophet comes to him, and says, *turn in with me, and eat bread*, he follows the old Prophets Light, and goes with him, and there comes out a *Lyon* and tears him: So labour first to have the conscience well informed, and then that it be tender, that ye may not drive Carts and Wains over it. And 3*ly*. Hearken to the voice of the conscience; for its Gods Deputy: a man will never keep a personal Covenant with God, that looks not to these three.

Secondly, As ye would look to your Conscience, so look to your Conversation; there are many things that

are neceſſar to be ſpoken to here, our ſecret walk, our Family walk, our publick walk, comparing them with the Rules of the Goſpel; It would take a long time to go through them. I will cloſe all with theſe two words, and ſhal ſay no more. 1. I have long longed to handle this Head of perſonal Covenanting, ye have now heard fourteen Sermons on it, the Stones of theſe Walls, and the Timber of this Houſe, God himſelf and his holy Angels ſhal be witneſſes againſt you, if ye do not perſonally covenant with him: for, in ſo far as I know the mind of God has been delivered truly to you, and all of you your ſelves ſhal be witneſſes againſt other, if ye fall not on this work of perſonal covenanting with God; I know nothing would more contribute to make you ſerious Chriſtians, than the practice of it, and if ye have not done it, go and do it, ſubſcribe your Name, lift up your hand to God, if ye delay it, and expect ſome better time, remember a Fever, a Flux, or a Scruby, will ſtop the flux of your glaſs, and if you delay until death, either Roving, or Stupidity ſhal carry you to the Grave; Therefore let one go and ſay, I am the Lords, and another ſubſcribe and call himſelf by the name of *Iſrael.* 2ly. If ye will go and do it, all by-gones ſhal be by-gones, and all former Tranſgreſſions ſhal be paſt, nay, if ye were never ſo poor, never ſo ſimple, never ſo Ignorant, if ye were of never ſo mean a Birth, of never ſuch mean Parts, if ye had never ſo weak a Faith, if ye had never ſuch a mixture of corruption with it, if ye will but ſay, I am the Lords, and from this time forth, will Covenant to take him, as he is offered in the Goſpel, and do the duties that the Covenant requires, the Bargain is made, and its ſubſcribed, its an everlaſting Covenant, and as ye have made an everlaſting Covenant, ye ſhal have an everlaſting Name, ſo long as God is God; and this Covenant ſhal bring you to the place, where ye ſhal be made a Pillar in the Temple of God, and ye know a Pillar laſts as long as the houſe ſtands.

SERMON

SERMON XXI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

THe third particular in this part of the Verſe remains, which is the Aſſurance that *David* had, that he was perſonally Covenanted with God, he can affirm it, and ſet it down in the Bible, and make it a part of the Canon of the Scripture, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, ſo that this being the third thing, I ſhall take this third Note, and therewith cloſe this ſecond Branch of the verſe, and the Note is this.

Doctrine. *That not only does God take Believers in a perſonal Covenant with him, but they may be clear, aſſured, and able to affirm it that God has made a Covenant with them.* This aſſurance *David* hath here, and the Spirit of God doth ſo agree with his aſſertion, that its made a part of the Canon, a part of the Bible, that God made with him an everlaſting Covenant, ſo this is the Truth that I will handle this day, that one may be aſſured, and very clear, they may be able confidently to aſſert, that God hath made a Covenant with them. This being a thing of great Importance, I will follow it in this method. 1. I will open to you, that Aſſurance of a perſonal Intereſt to the Covenant is very neceſſary. 2*ly*. I will ſhew you, that this Aſſurance is not only attainable, but its not ſo difficult, as ordinarly its apprehended to be. 3*ly*. I will open to you ſome of the Ways and Methods that the Spirit keeps, in bringing Believers to be Aſſured, that God hath made a Covenant with them. And *Laſtly*, I ſhal apply it.

For the *Firſt*, That this aſſurance, that we particularly are in Covenant with God, is of great neceſſity; that we may be able to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*. For clearing a little the neceſſity of it, I will premiſe

two

wo Distinctions. *First*, Take notice, that there is a Three-fold Assurance, that the Scripture mentions, *First*, There is an *Assurance of knowledge*, Colos. 2. 2. *That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.* 2*ly* There is an *assurance of Faith*, Heb. 10. 22 *Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our bodies wash'd with pure water.* 3*ly*. There is an *assurance of hope*, Heb. 6. 11. *And we desire, that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope, unto the end.* v 12. *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience, inherit the promises*; There ye have a Three-fold Assurance, there is an Assurance of Knowledge, that is the first proposition of the practical Syllogism, by it I come to be assured of the Mystery of Godliness, that its a Truth: There is an Assurance of Faith, whereby I am assured of my Interest in that Mystery, there is an Assurance of hope, whereby I am assured, that God will make out all that is contained in that Mystery; now we take in all the Three, when we speak of Assurance in the Covenant, there must be first, Assurance of Knowledge, that God hath made a Covenant, and on what Terms he hath made it. 2*ly*. There is Assurance of Faith, that I am in that Covenant. 3*ly*. There is Assurance of Hope, that all the contents of that Covenant, shall in due time be accomplished; when I say that its necessary a Believer be assured, I take in all the Three.

But 2*ly*. Take notice that there is a twofold necessity, when we say this Assurance is necessary, that God hath made a Covenant with us. *First*, There is some thing necessary for the being of a Christian. 2*ly*, There is somewhat necessary for the well-being of a Christian; now, we say not, assurance that we are in the Covenant, is necessary for the being of a Christian, no; one may be in Covenant with God, and far from being assured of it; several times Questions about their Interest, may be more necessary than Assurance for them; several times, the Thief Scandalous, and presumptous sins, will take away their assurance and sometimes the moth slothfulness, will take it away; it were a hard Doctrine and dreadful, to

say,

ſay, Aſſurance is neceſſary for the being of a Chriſtian, only this Aſſurance we ſay is neceſſary for the well being of a Chriſtian; they cannot live ſo comfortably in Chriſt if they were not aſſured that the Covenant is made with them: ſo ye may underſtand what is meaned by this, when we ſay, Aſſurance is neceſſary for the well being of a Chriſtian, to be aſſured that he is in the Covenant.

To confirm this, I will offer you five or ſix things that will let you ſee the Advantages, that the clearneſs of an Intereſt in the Covenant, draws after it, 1. When our Intereſt in the Covenant is clear, our Perſonal Intereſt, it's eaſie to believe all the Promiſes of the Covenant; it's obſerved by ſome Practick Divines, there are two things that makes us doubt of the Promiſes, ſometimes we doubt of Gods power, and ſometimes we doubt of his willingneſs, it's indeed a rare thing to ſee a Chriſtians Faith ſtick at Gods power, a *Philiſtine* may acknowledge, theſe are the great Gods that divided the Red ſea; now when we are clear of an Intereſt in the Covenant, we can no more doubt of his willingneſs more than a man will doubt, that his neighbour will give him an Apple, who hath given him an Apple-tree, or that God is willing to give the World light, ſince he hath given them a Sun and a Moon; no, he is able to believe all the Promiſes of Pardon, of Perſeverance, of through-bearing in affliction, they are all eaſily credited, when we believe, he hath made a Covenant with us, ſince Faith ſticks not at his power, it hath no ground to ſtick at his willingneſs, when the whole Covenant is made with us. 2. Another Advantage by being cleared of our intereſt in the Covenant, that readily by it we are ſtirred up to love Chriſt, our love to Chriſt taks fire at Chriſt's love to us, we can never love him, except he love us: our love to him, is but like a plack candle kindled at a Torch, our love comes to be cleared by his love to us: now there is nothing clears up his love more to us, than to be clear about our Intereſt in the Covenant: an Intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant, contributes very much, for the clearing of his love to us: it reveals his love to us, and thereby it kindles our love to him: ſo that beſide that he eaſily believes the Promiſes, if our intereſt in the Covenant be cleared, we are helped to love Chriſt, and to have

have our black candle kindled at the Torch of his love, to us revealed in the Covenant. 3. The clearing an Intereſt in the Covenant, is a great remedy againſt ſervile fears, there is a kind of Hell in theſe fears, there is not only a guiltineſs in them, but a torment accompanying them; ye that know what it is to be keeped in bondage under fears, know, that there is no Fever, no Priſon, no diſquieting Diſpenſation outwardly, that can come near the letting in the waters to the Soul, as a flood of ſervile fears will do, now to be cleared about an intereſt in the Covenant, that God hath made it with me, contributes exceedingly, to ſcatter all theſe ſervile fears; there lyes the remedy of theſe fears, the application of the covenant, like a Plaiſter laid to a Sore; ſometimes Believers will take other ways to cure their fears, but they bring their Waters out of Gutters, and there is no right Balm, that can be applyed to them, but the covenant; ſo if we come to plead an intereſt in the covenant, not only kindles it our love to Chriſt, and ſcatters our fears, But 4*ly*. Theſe that have an intereſt in the covenant cleared, are excellently furniſhed for all Duties of active Obedience; whatever God calls a perſon to do, they ſtill go to a Promiſe, if they be to repent if they be to pray, if to believe, if to ſing, or meditat, whatever the Duty be, an intereſt to the covenant, is an excellent ſupport; a perſon that will go on in his own ſtrength, in performing Duties goes to bring forth the thing that is not there-ben, it's impoſſible to wring it out of thy own heart; So the way to be helped in all duties, is to know an intereſt in the Covenant. 5*ly*, Know, there is nothing contributes ſo much to patient ſuffering, as to be cleared of an intereſt in the Covenant; it's remarkable, *Rom.* 5. When the *Apoſtle* is giving a reaſon, why Chriſtians they joy in Tribulation, and are not aſhamed, they are juſtified by Faith, *Being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God*; Mark there an intereſt in the Covenant contributes to their patient ſuffering; it were almoſt impoſſible for a Chriſtian to bear, what we find them put to, *Heb.* 11. throughout, if it were not on the account of the Covenant they hazard on the Faithfulneſs of God & the credit of his Promiſes, therefore they rejoyce in Tribulation, and waſh their hands in the Flames; and the great thing hath made them

do

do it, is their being cleared, that God hath made a Covenant with them. *Lastly.* An interest, and to be clear about it, that God hath made the Covenant with us, is necessar, in regard the neglecting of Assurance, is a kind of contempt of the Covenant, the person that neglects Assurance about it, is a despiser of it; there are some things we undervalue, as if a man let a prin fall out of his sleeve he is not anxious that ever he get it again, but if he let a Jewel, or a precious Stone fall, he values that, how careful and restless is he to be cleared, and to get it again? If we be careless of our Assurance, we undervalue the Covenant, we look on it, as a man having a Prin fallen out of his sleeve; ye see the grounds of a necessity of an interest in the Covenant, thereby we get love to Christ, the faith of all the Promises, it contributes to stop and scarter servile fears, its an excellent help to Obedience, and it influences cheerfulness under the Cross; and the neglect of it evidences, that we contemn the Covenant. From all these grounds ye see, that a Believer should be assured, that the Lord hath made a Covenant with him.

The 2. Thing I proposed, That this assurance is attainable, here we have the *Papists* and *Arminians*, great adversaries to us, they call us all *Enthusiasts*, and they say, we pretend to a possibility of Assurance of an Interest in the Covenant; they do not deny, but the Apostles and Pen-men of the Scriptures had this Assurance, but they say, because *David* and *Paul* had it, will it therefore follow, that every Christian should have it; no, every Christian ought to have it, and is obliged to study it, and that it is attainable, I will make it appear, on these Four or Five remarkable grounds 1. If God hath made it a duty, to endeavour Assurance of an Interest in the Covenant, then it may be attainable, no body will deny this; and that God hath made it a duty, ye will find it, Heb. 6. 11. *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that you be not slothful, But followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the Promises;* Mark here Three things. 1. What the Apostle Exhorts to, he Exhorts to assurance, and the full assurance of Hope, 2*dly*. Whom he exhorts, its not the Schollars only, or the eminent Christians, but every *one* of you. 3*dly*. Its remarkable, the means he prescribes, *that ye be not slothful*, importing

ting, that ſlothfulneſs will hough their Aſſurances, and that diligence is the way to attain it; here is a place that evidences, that a Believer may come, not only to aſſurance, but full aſſurance, and every one that is diligent may come to it. 2*dly*. It is evident, that this Aſſurance is attainable, in regard there are ſome Duties called for, that were impracticable, without aſſurance; as for Example, Chriſt calls a man to this, doſt thou believe? if the man could have no Aſſurance nor Knowledge of the Faith, the Queſtion were impertinent, he might Anſwer, Its impoſſible for one to be Aſſured of any Intereſt in Chriſt; he would never have asked the Queſtion, if he could not be Aſſured, and Chriſt hath bidden us, *Rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God, and rejoyce that your names are written in the Book of Life*, and can we rejoyce in the hope of Glory, or that our Names are writen in the Book of Life, if we could not be aſſured of it. 3. That this aſſurance is attainable is evident from this, that there is a neceſſary Connexion betwixt the golden links of that golden Chain of Grace, *Whom he did perdeſtinate, them he called, and whom he called, them he juſtifies, and whom he juſtifies, them he alſo glorifies*; Its not denyed, but we may be aſſured of our effectual Calling; they ſay, a man may have Grace, but he knows not if he will perſevere; they ſay he may be in Covenant with God the day, and with the Devil to morrow, no, there is an inſeparable connexion, *Whom he did predeſtinat, them he alſo called, and whom he called, them he juſtified, and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorfied*; ſo grant, that we may know our effectual calling, and that we are in a ſtate of Grace, we may be aſſured we ſhall be glorified, and our Intereſt in the Covenant being once cleared, it can never be diſput again. 4*ly*. That this aſſurance is attainable, its evident from this, there are many recorded in Scripture had it and laid down in the Grave with that, Pſal. 16. 9 *My fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope*, Verſ. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, neither will thou ſuffer thine holy one to ſee corruption*. Verſ. 11. *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life*. *Paul* had it Rom. 8. 38 *I am perſwaded, that neither death nor life, ſhall be able to ſeparat me from the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus*. But ſay they, will ye compare with them? They had immmediate Revelations, and Inſpirations, why are ye not alſo Pen-men of the Scripture? Why write

write ye not a new Bible? We anſwer, if the grounds of this Aſſurance had been extraordinar Revelations, we ſhould never have pleaded Aſſurance, becauſe they had it; but the ground of our Aſſurance, is the love of God in Chriſt, and the love of God in Chriſt is common to all Believers as well as to *Paul*, its like *the fountain opened to the houſe of David*, that's opened for all the Houſe as well as for *David* himſelf; ſo if they had Aſſurance upon grounds common to all the Elect, all the Elect they may attain this Aſſurance. Theſe things being laid together, will clear this Truth, that as this Aſſurance of a perſonal intereſt in the Covenant is neceſſary, ſo its attainable.

Before I proceed to ſhew the Method and way, how the Spirit brings up to this Aſſurance, here ye would mark two things. 1. Take notice, That this Aſſurance of a perſonal Intereſt in the Covenant, is not like the Intereſt it ſelf, but it differs in two things from it, 1 The Intereſt it ſelf, its not acquired by us, it is that which is conferred on us in effectual Calling, when we are meerly Patients; the greateſt Intereſt in the Covenant is ſo made up that in effect, we are meer Patients, when we are intereſted in it; its not ſo in the Aſſurance of an Intereſt. I deny not, but the Spirit ſometimes will give a glance of Light, when one will be very ſlothful, but its rare; we are to come by our Aſſurance by Diligence; readily ſometimes the Spirit will give extraordinary things; that Myſtery that Mr. *Sibs* reports of a woman in *England* when ſhe was going to die, all the Miniſters that came to her, as they had often diſcourſes with her, they could bring her to no clearing of her Intereſt or that ſhe would come to Heaven, ſhe having a Glaſs in her hand, ſhe ſays to them, I can no more be ſaved, than that Glaſs can be preſerved, by throwing it againſt a wall, and ſhe threw it againſt the Wall, and it did rebound ſafe from the Wall the caſe of theſe extraordinary things, is like a man coming to a deep water in a dark night, where there are Steps and providentially one ſhould hold out a Candle to him, and let him ſee over the Steps; if another ſhould come at ſuch a time of the night, he muſt not think, that a Candle will be holden out to him, this is not the ordinary way, we muſt not expect extraordinary things,

things, our Aſſurance of an Intereſt comes in by Diligence, *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; ſo this clearing of an Intereſt comes in by Diligence, and is not like the Intereſt it ſelf, which readily at the beginning is made up, when we are meerly paſſive and in a ſtate of nature. 2*ly*. Ye would notice another difference, that of all things that ever God made, a Believers intereſt in the Covenant is moſt enduring, it ſhall be as laſting, as the Union betwixt the humane nature and the Divine, as long as Chriſt is God-man in one perſon, as long ſhall the Members make up a Myſtical Body; if the Intereſt in the Covenant be once ſecured, its as ſure as the perſonal Union betwixt the humane and Divine nature; yet there is nothing more unſure, than the Aſſurance of that Intereſt, readily it will be had one day, and doubted the next day.

And here, before I open the way, how the Spirit brings up one to aſſurance that the Lord hath made with me a Covenant, I would open ſomewhat that hath influence on the changeableneſs of this aſſurance, that we can aſſert it one time over the belly of all temptations, and another time the leaſt thing will make us doubt. 1. Several times a Chriſtian comes to this aſſurance two ways, theſe two ways that Chriſts ſpeaks of when he is exhorting his Diſciples. *To lay up treaſures in heaven, where the moth and thief will not come*; ye know there are many uteonſils, and things that folk lay up, that are taken away, ſometimes by the moth and ſometimes by the thief; Divines underſtand by the thief, ſcandalous ſins, if a Chriſtian fall in ſins againſt his conſcience, he will be ſure to have his Aſſurance clouded, he will not be able to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*. Why, the Thief hath taken it away; ſometimes its not the Thief, but the Moth that takes it away, that is to ſay ſlothfulneſs, it breaks not in ſo ſtrongly as the thief doth, but ſlothfulneſs is like the Moth, that piece and piece frets, and eats away the piece, as the Moth eats the Garment; ſo one may be in Chriſt, and in the Covenant, and its clear that God hath made a Covenant with them, one day, and another day, the Thief and the Moth, may have taken it away. But 2*ly* This Aſſurance comes to be ſo changable, that like the Moon it will have many different Forms, the Aſſurance and

clearing

clearing of an Intereſt, will have many different Forms in one Moneth. God orders it ſo for ſeveral ends, there are ſome perſons, the want of an Intereſt in the Covenant, will damn them, but the want of Aſſurance, will not damn them, and yet it may keep them fearing and doubting; its very neceſſary, that God take ſome to Glory in a lacking Veſſel, though it drown them not, yet it may weit them, and they may be all their days, under fears and bondage; and this may be neceſſary for them. Having thus opened theſe two things, that this Aſſurance is neceſſary on all the ſix grounds that I have given that a Chriſtian can never be a comfortable, nor cheerful Chriſtian, except he be able to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; and next it is attainable, the Lord would never have bidden us rejoyce, if our Names were not written in the Book of Life, he would never have bidden us rejoyce in the hope of Glory, if it were not attainable. So though this aſſurance be variable, and often the Thief and Moth will take it from us; yet its real, and ſolid, and its attainable.

SERMON XXII.

2 Samuel. 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

IT is a Doctrine very diſhonourable to God, and very prejudicial to the Saints comfort, to deny, that Believers may be aſſured, that God hath made a Covenat with them; our Divines in diſputing with *Papiſts* and *Arminians*, on the Heads of the certainty of Salvation, they call that Doctrine a Doctrine of Devils, they teach the thing indeed, that the Devil hath ordinarily taught, for he is often preſſing doubting, and hindering a Chriſtian from ſaying, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*. Before I ſpeak of the way, how the Spirit brings the Elect to be aſſured: I would yet premiſe ſomethings about it. 1 We do not Aſſert an aſſurance *a priori*, as they ſpeak, the *Papiſts* ſay

ſay that we ſpeak and preach to People, as if we had read the Book of Gods Decrees; and that we there ſaw, who were Elected, or reprobated, no, that is not the way we take, we tell them, that the good tree is known by his good fruit, and the corrupt tree is known by the corrupt fruit, its not by ſearching into the root, but by ſearching into the fruit, that we tell Chriſtians, they may be aſſured of their Intereſt in the Covenant. *Next*, We ſay not, that this Aſſurance comes in by *Enthuſiaſms* and Revelations, they ſay we are *Enthuſiaſticks*, no, we are far from that, we look on their way as deluding; we deny not the Spirit a liberty of giving extraordinary things, and the Candle may be holden over the Window, when he is walking alongſt the ſteps in a dark night. 2. When we bid folk be aſſured by effects and fruits, we do not aſſert an aſſurance by effects, that hath theſe three defects in it. 1. We do not aſſert Marks, as procuring cauſes of an Intereſt in the Covenant, we do not preach, be diligent, and clear an Intereſt in the Covenant, only we ſay, be diligent, and clear an Intereſt procured by Jeſus; Marks are not ſtones of which the wall is built, but they are excellent Mortar, to make the ſtones ſtick together, the Wall grows little by the Mortar, but the ſtones ſtick together by it; the clearing of an Intereſt, and of what Chriſt hath done with our caſe agree well, when ſuitable Marks are brought. 2*ly*. We do not aſſert Marks from Sanctification and Diligence to wrong the Spirits concuring; the *Antinomians* follow us, they ſay, Marks are prejudicial to the Spirits working; we confeſs, our Marks are all written in ſmall Print, and we have but dark eyes, and if the Sun be not up, its ill to read them; we deny not but many Chriſtians are in the dark about their Intereſt, and cannot affirm, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, under deſertion; the perſon that would read his Marks under a cloud, is like a man that would read his Charter, when he hath neither Day-light, nor Candle-light. But not to inſiſt on the Doctrine of Aſſurance, againſt *Papiſts* and *Arminians*, I would come to the thing that I left at in the Forenoon; I was proving, that the Aſſurance that *David* aſſerts, *that the Lord hath made with me a Covenant* is a things attainable; and I gave you ſeveral grounds of it and I would add this, that its not ſo difficult

to be attained, as many apprehend, I confeſs it is difficult but not ſo difficult.

I would offer you for clearing this that even an Aſſurance, that would exclude ſeveral Fears and Jealouſies, is not ſo difficult to be attained, by offering theſe three or four things to be conſidered. 1. There is nothing in our former life, that can prove or evince, that God hath not made a Covenant with us; many a time Believers ſtick at this, *I was a perſecuter and a blaſphemer*, ſays *Paul*, *but I obtained mercy, that in me he might ſhew a pattern to them that ſhould come after me*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16. Thy former life will not prove that God hath made a Covenant with thee, he made a Covenant with *Paul*, and he had as much to ſay againſt him as againſt thee. 2. The preſent mixture of corruption with thy Grace, will not prove that God hath not made a Covenant with thee; yea, it may be thou haſt made a Covenant with him and doubts that he made it with thee; Why? Since thou made the Covenant with him, thou went to him and wrote it down, and ſpread it before him, thou lift up thy hands, and haſt broken it; that will not prove, that he hath not made a Covenant with thee; *David* had begun very early, the man that wrot this verſe in the *Bible*, when he went out againſt *Goliah*, he went out in the Name of the Lord his God, his elder Brother was angry with him, and *Saul* called him a Stripling, his Father *Jeſſe* had imployed him to follow the Ewes, the Lord takes him from following the Ewes, and makes a Covenant with him, and when he is dying, he hath it to ſay with aſſurance, *The Lord hath made a Covenant with me, an everlaſting Covenant*: So that will not prove, that he hath not made a Covenant with thee, that ſince thou made it with him, thou haſt failed. Theſe two being laid, aſide, they make the aſſurance the leſs difficult. 3*ly*. Very ordinarly, this clearing of our aſſurance in the Covenant, comes when there is diligence; ordinarly when we are diligent, the Spirit comes and lights his Candle, and lets us ſee our aſſurance; there are a number that complain, they are not aſſured, and cleared of their Intereſt, and all their Religion lies in doubting; ye may juſtly ſuſpect them that they are ſlothful and ſluggards, they are not diligent, they go not often to duty; were they diligent, they

would not want the Spirit's concurrence, readily if we want assurance, we have quenched the Spirit's motions, or grieved the Spirit; were we but more diligent, we would have more Light; all the marks in the world will never clear an Hypocrite, nor give him assurance, nor will all the condescending marks that God hath made, clear the sluggard. So, if we were but a little more diligent, we would be more assured, and we would be the better able to say, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, for the Spirit uses not to be wanting with Illumination to them for whom he gives Assistance for practical Duties. 4*ly*. That it is not so difficult, will appear from this Truth; that often the people of God ly in the way of their own assurance they hinder their own clearing, that God hath made a Covenant with them.

I will offer you four ways, how frequently, when clearing an assurance, about our interest in the Covenant, might be had, that we use to hinder it. 1. Several times we hinder it by disputing the Question at a wrong time, we are never so ready to dispute our interest, as under desertion, there are some times when our Spirits will be carried as a Ship under sail, and all the design of the Soul will then be to do, but at another time all the design of the Soul will be, to doubt and dispute our interest; and we are never more ready to do this, than under desertion; now, what a foolish thing is it, to go and debate with a man, that is roving under a Fever, and we are never deserted, but we are roving: assisting influences are so necessary then, to go and dispute, to take the time when one is in the dark, and their Candle put out, and then coming to read their Evidence, as I said before, our marks are written in small print, and we have but little Light, and if the Candle be put out, then to go, and dispute our case, whether God hath made a Covenant with us, is the wrong time; yet readily, we are never more ready to do it, than at that time. 2*ly*. Sometime Believers hinder their own Assurance, that God hath made a Covenant with them, not only by chusing the wrong time, but when they take wrong Marks, they take not the Right Rule; several times we go exceedingly wrong in our Marks, the generality of prophane and natural men, they

they take the Marks that the *Phariſee* did, I *thank God, I am not like this man*, I am not a drunkard, nor an extortioner; and theſe are their Marks; many a time Believers they take the contrair way, they take too high Marks, O! ſay they, ſome could ſay God hath made a Covenant with me, I can delight in him, I can meditat on him, I can be ſatisfied with him as with Marrow and with Fatneſs; But they have the Complaint, that the elder Brother of the Prodigal had, *thou never gave me a kid to make merry with*; I can never count on the day, wherein the Calf was killed to me, and that I was clothed with the beſt Robe and ſhoes put on my feet, and a Ring on my finger; therefore they conclude, he hath not made an everlaſting Covenant with them, by taking too high Marks; thou may imped thy Aſſurance, I believe it indeed which the greateſt Divines affirm the Reaſon, why ſo many at Death have peace, that readily want it all their Life time, as ye will find few of the godly, but they will go to the Grave in peace; one reaſon is, at that paſs and ſtrait, they are driven to take the loweſt marks, they can ſay, *All my deſire is before him, and my groaning is not hid from him*; they will take at that paſs the loweſt Marks, for there they muſt either do or die, they are content to do, as *Benhadad's* ſervants did with *Ahab, is he alive, he is my Brother*, they got that word, *my Brother*, they take hold of the leaſt word that makes for them; at that paſs we are driven to take in our light at a ſcore, though it come not in at the window, therefore they have more peace at Death than they had in their Life-time, now when we go to take too high Marks, its a great impediment in the way of aſſurance. But I add. 3*ly*. to let you ſee, that many a time Believers ly in the way of their own Aſſurance, and hinder it, ſeveral times there is an inclination in the Soul, rather to intertain the challenges of the Spirit, than the Comforts of the Spirit; eſpecially after our effectual calling; the common comforts of the Spirit, will be intertained in a Natural State, far more eaſily than the challenges of the Spirit. If ye ask what is the Reaſon of this, that after the effectual calling, guiltineſs hath another ſmell, than before effectual calling? The Reaſon is, a Believer finds the ſcent of his guiltineſs ſ-

that the challenges of the Spirit are far more pronly intertained, than the comforts of the Spirit, the Spirit will ſometimes knock at the door, *Open to me, my dove, my undefiled*, but if he come with a knock and ſay, *Thou haſt procured all theſe things, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, look back to thy way in the valley*, How will that eaſily be intertained after effectual Calling? Now, on theſe accounts, the taking too high Marks, and reading Marks under a cloud, and being ſo prone, rather to intertain the challenges of the Spirit, than the comforts of the Spirit, makes, that a Believer lyes in the way of his own Aſſurance, and cannot come up to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*; Not becauſe thou wants allowance and ground to do it, but becauſe thou diſputs in the dark, and takes too high Marks. To cloſe all, I will clear one Queſtion, which readily many of you will ask, and it is the third thing I propoſed, in the Doctrinal part of this Doctrine.

Queſt. What is the way and method, by which Chriſtians come up, and can be able to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*: How brings the Spirit them to this?

Anſwer, That I may make way to the practical Part of this Doctrine, I will offer four ſteps, by which the Spirit uſes to bring the Elect, to affirm it as confidently, as *David* ſets it down as a part of the Bible, and when he was a dying, it was no time then to diſſemble, *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*: How doth the Spirit bring the Elect to this ground of Aſſurance, to be able to affirm that God hath made the Covenant with them? I confeſs its a great Priviledge, and they have a great Charter that can ſay, its their Priviledge, *They have the promiſes of this life, and that which is to come*, they have no leſs in one Article, in one line of the Bible, *He ſhall make them Ruler over all that he hath*; a little time will try this to be no fancy, but its ſurer than the Covenant with the Sun and the Moon: How brings the Spirit them up to this Aſſurance? 1ſt. Ordinarly before he brings them up to be aſſured, that the Lord hath made with me a Covenant, he takes down the natural Aſſurance, like one that hath to build upon an old Foundation, and he finds it rotten, and thinks it beſt

beſt to take it down to the bottom, before he build a new Foundation; ſo that readily, in the beginning of the Spirits working, a perſon can give no account of the Spirits working, neither what he hath done in the old Foundation, nor the new; ask you your caſe, you can readily give no account, ye dare not build on the old Foundation, and ye dare not ſay, ye have a new Work, this is very frequently in the way of the Spirits bringing the Soul to, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; they can neither build on the old ground, nor dare they ſay, they have a new ground; this hath ordinarly a tendency to the clearing of an intereſt where-ever ye find a perſon like *Rebecca*, having Twins ſtrugling within her, they know not what to ſay, they are ſo confuſed, the Spirit hath taken away the old ground, and for any thing that is known, the Spirit hath not laid the new Foundation; That caſe looks like to be the beginning, to come to that day in the week that thou wilt ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*; That is the firſt part, whereby the Spirit leads to the clearing an intereſt in a perſonal Covenant. 2*ly*, Where the Spirit is leading to the clearing an intereſt in a perſonal Covenant with God, ordinarly the Spirit prompts to Duty, and aſſiſts all diligence; we are not to expect it with raptures of Joy and Conſolation, and delight in God, many a time like the *Syrian leper* that was ſent to the King of *Iſrael*, *I thought he would have come out, and called on his God, and laid his hand upon the place*: We think except we get ſuch elevation of peace and joy in prayer, we can never have peace; No, we muſt not limit the Lord, if he take that way, it is well; but the ordinary way is, he will help at prayer, and excite to delight in him; at another time he withdraws himſelf, and makes the deſertion thy burden; the complaint of his abſence may be as ſweet a Mark as his preſence; the heart that will complain of his Abſence, may prove an intereſt, as well as his preſence. Now, when he hath pull'd down the old rotten wall, and not poſſibly brought the new above ground, but he aſſiſts in Prayer, in Believing, in Repentance, in Mortification of luſts, then he is about to bring thee to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; it is near the break of the day, it is not far from the dawning, he that hath hel-

ped thee to Diligence, is not far from bringing thy Conſolation, even tho it ſeem to be the darkeſt time of the night; Yet, if the Spirit be helping at Duty, and taking a lift of thy Caſe, the day is near the breaking with thee. But 3*ly*, The Spirit guides to this Aſſurance, by giving true Marks, that God hath made a Covenant with him. And here I ſhall enquire, what are the ſure Marks, by which one may try, if God hath made the Covenant particularly with them; I have made the Covenant with him, and have Vowed and Promiſed, and Subſcribed with my hand, and have lifted up my hand, but how ſhall I know if he hath made a Covenant with me? The buſineſs is not ſo difficult to know, if thou be diligent, and be not an Hypocrite, and playing the cheat in thy Religion, but conforming thy heart to this Goſpel, and wreſtling with all the Non-conformities of thy heart, I have ſearched the Judgement of many, how to come to reciprocal Marks, how to know if he hath made a Covenant with us; *Antinomians* have diſput the Queſtions ſo exactly, and objected ſo ſtrongly about our wanting theſe Marks, that they put Divines to ſo many Reſtrictions and Limitations, that it is difficult to give a reciprocal Mark, on which a Chriſtian may reſt, if he hath made a Covenant with him. I will offer you three things, on which I lay the greateſt weight my ſelf, 1. That Mark that Mr. *Baxter* hath often come over, a habitual preferring of Chriſt's Intereſts to the intereſt of the fleſh, that is indeed a great Mark that God hath made a Covenant with thee, when Chriſt's Intereſts are habitually preferred to all the intereſts of the fleſh.

To clear this Mark, ye would notice three things, 1. When God enters in a Covenant with a perſon, they take up ſin as an enemy, they hate it as an enemy, they have entered in a League with the contrary Party, they take up ſin, eſpecially preſumptuous ſin as an enemy, and accordingly they deal with it; They hate it, they eſchew the company that may bring temptations to it, for they have entered in a League with its greateſt Enemy, even with Chriſt: Shortly after *Paul* is a Convert, he is at, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death*? He was angry at the very beeing of ſin, and could not ſuffer the ſmell of it, whatever the Sin be, not only pre-

preſumptuous and groſs ſins, and neglect of Duty, if thou has entered in a Covenant with God, thou has broken the Covenant with death and hell, and if thou has no kindneſs looking to that airt, thou has great ground to ſay, *The Lord has made a Covenant with me*; they take up ſin as an enemy, and deal with it ſo. 2*ly*, In reference to this, the Soul goes unitedly againſt it as an Enemy, the Underſtanding is at, I ſhould leave ſuch a ſin, the Conſcience is at, I will leave ſuch a ſin, the Will and Affections are at, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity, for I have keeped the Commandments of my God*; they turn it out of doors, if there be a taking it up as an enemy, and dealing with it ſo, and the Underſtanding, Conſcience, Will, and Affections, uniting againſt it as an Enemy, thou may be ſure to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*; The Bargain muſt be driven by both Parties, but if thou be grown ſecure, and neglects Duty, and goes out againſt ſin as a friend, and has not taken it up as an enemy, and dealt with it ſo, thou may ſay, *I have made a covenant with the Lord*, but thou cannot ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*.

Secondly, Theſe that have made a perſonal Covenant with him, and he with them, they have a ſecond Mark, they follow the Deſign of the Covenant, which is Holineſs, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Having theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting Holineſs in the fear of the Lord.* Now he that hath entered in Covenant with God, and would have a ſure Mark from his holineſs, ſhould look to theſe two. 1. He is to look to the Holineſs of his Heart and Converſation; if he ſay, I am holy in my Deſires, and holy in my Delights, I have a holy Joy, and a holy Peace, and has not a holy Walk, and looks not like a ſavourie Chriſtian in his converſation, that perſon cannot readily ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*: He may have made a Covenant with God, but he cannot ſay, *God hath made a Covenant with me*. Beſides 2*ly*, Not only muſt Holineſs be in the Converſation, and in the Heart, but he is careful to prefer the Deſign of the Covenant to all other things; If the Lord ſhould give thee the Offer that he gave to *Solomon* at *Gibeon*, *Ask of me*, ſays he, *Riches*, *or Honour*, and many things he named, and I will give it to thee, he

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preferred Wiſdom to them all: So he that is in Covenant with God, would prefer Holineſs to any thing that God could offer. It is remarkable, *Pſal.* 119. 111. *Thy teſtimonies have I choſen, as an heritage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart.* Mark how he came by that, *I have choſen*, what chooſed he? *I have choſen thy Teſtimonies*, that is a general word, it is not, *I have choſen thy Promiſes*, but *I have choſen thy Teſtimonies*, taking in the Commands. *Mark* 3*ly*, For what he chooſed them, *I have choſen thy Teſtimonies for my heretage.* Mark 4*ly*, The Reaſon why he chooſed them, *I have choſen thy teſtimonies, for they are the rejoycing of my heart*; importing, whatever I meet with, I get no true Joy from it, therefore, *I have choſen thy Teſtimonies, for my heretage for ever, for they are the rejoycing of my heart*; I can get nothing that rejoyces my heart, but allennerly thy Teſtimonies, therefore I have choſen them; that is the ſecond Mark, whereby ye may try, if God hath made the Covenant with you, if ye have come to take up ſin as any enemy and deal with it ſo; and if ye have taken Holineſs, not only in Heart and Converſation, but ye have choſen it as your Heretage, becauſe it rejoyces the Heart.

3*ly*, Ye may know if he hath made this Covenant with you, by his accompliſhment of the Covenant to you; if he hath begun to fulfil the Covenant, he hath certainly made the Covenant with you; Experience is a notable Ratification of the Promiſe; O! but it is a ſweet Proof of the truth of the Promiſe, he that believeth hath a witneſs within him, that Chriſt is the Son of God; he hath the Spirit within him, and none can ſend the Spirit, but the Son of God: Take a view of the Promiſes, and ſort them, that ye may go to ſuch a Promiſe, when ye are under challenges, under deadneſs and deſertion, and mark them; It is a dreadful thing when all the Bible is alike to us, and when we have not ſome Paſſages of the Bible, that we may ſay of them, *Theſe are my Scriptures.* Now, if he hath been pleaſed to accompliſh the Promiſe, thou may ſay, *He hath made with me a Covenant.* It will fall in afterward, when I ſpeak of the ſeveral paſſages in this Verſe, by what Rules we ſhall try, if the things that we meet with in our Spirit, be the accompliſhment of the Promiſe; Obſerve your caſe, and compare it with the

Promiſe,

Promiſe, many have no skill to do this, they take the Promiſes in groſs, they obſerve not abſolute and conditional Promiſes, they compare not their caſe with the Promiſe; therefore none is ſo confident, to ſay; *God hath made with me a Covenant.* I ſay to you, go home and ſay to your hearts, the word that *Ahab* ſaid to *Micajah*, *How often ſhall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but the truth?* Go and charge your Heart and Conſcience, with, *See thou tell me nothing but the truth*; If theſe Marks do not agree to thee, whatever thou ſay of making a Covenant with God, thou may go home after all theſe Sermons, and ſay *I have made a covenant with God*, but I defy thee to ſay *God hath made a Covenant with me.*

SERMON XXIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire, although He make it not to grow.

WHEN firſt I entered on this Verſe, I propoſed four things to be conſidered. *Firſt*, The Nature of *David*'s Security, it is a Covenant. *2ly*, The Parties Tranſacting in this Covenant, the Lord and me, of theſe two I have ſpoken all the things that I judge neceſſary to be ſpoken, in a multitude of Sermons: The other two Branches of the Verſe, which are the moſt Natural, remain to be handled; The firſt whereof are, the Properties of this Covenant, there are three of them mentioned in the Verſe, it is *everlaſting*, it is *ordered in all things, and ſure*; Where, by the way, in the general, ye would notice two things, *Firſt*, That theſe three Properties, are Marks of Diſtinction, betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; It was neither Everlaſting, nor, Ordered in all things, in any way ſuitable to Man's Salvation, nor was it Sure; So that from theſe three Properties, we can prove, That the Covenant God made with *David*, it was a Covenant of Grace, and

not

not the old Covenant of Works. 2*ly*, Ye would notice, that ſuch as would have peace from the Covenant muſt ſtudy and be acquaint with the Properties of it, it is no ſufficient ground for *David* at death to ſay, *The Lord hath made with me a Covenant*, unleſs it be an everlaſting Covenant, and well Ordered and Sure: Theſe who are ignorant of the Properties of the Covenant, can never have the Sweetneſs and Conſolation that the Covenant affoords. Therefore, without further, I will begin and handle this day, the firſt Property that is here mentioned of this Covenant, it is *an everlaſting Covenant*; it is true, the main thing I deſign, is, to handle the order of the Bleſſings of the Covenant; And here, before I can come at that I am to handle, there are two Textual Doubts neceſſary to be cleared. 1. How is the Covenant ſaid to be Everlaſting? 2*ly*: Whether this be a peculiar Property of the Covenant of Grace, not belonging to the Covenant of Works?

Queſt. *Firſt*, In what ſenſe the Covenant of Grace is ſaid to be Everlaſting?

Anſwer, For opening this, take notice, that a thing is ſaid to be Everlaſting in a Two-fold Senſe. 1. That is ſaid to be Everlaſting, that is never to end, though it had a Beginning; So ye find it, *Pſal.* 24. *Lift up your heads, ye everlaſting doors*; that is meant of the Heart and Soul of Man, which, though it had a Beginning, yet it is to endure for ever; ſo Everlaſting, and a proper Eternity, are not one thing, it will take two Everlaſtings to make one Eternity, *from everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God*; mark there, an Eternity takes two Everlaſtings. 2. A thing is ſaid to be Everlaſting, when it hath a proper Eternity; ſo *Iſaiah* 9. 6. Chriſt is called *wonderful counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the prince of Peace*; Now Everlaſting is to be taken in the ſecond ſenſe, it is an eternal Covenant, not only is it never to end, and is Everlaſting, but it is *from everlaſting*; However, it was tranſacted in time with Man, yet it was tranſacted with Chriſt from all Eternity, and it is as antient as the Covenant of Redemption; ſo ye ſee in what ſenſe it is called an Everlaſting Covenant, that is, an Eternal Covenant, from Eternity to Eternity.

Queſt. 2. Whether is this a peculiar Priviledge of the Covenant

Covenant of Grace, that it is Everlasting? The Reason of this Difficulty is. 1. The Covenant of Works is older in Time, for it was made with Man in a state of Integrity. 2ly, The Covenant of Works, is first in the order of Nature, for the Covenant of Grace being made with lapsed Man, it supposes the Covenant of Works to be broken. 3ly, It is supposed by many great Schollars, that if *Adam* nad not broken the Covenant of Works, he had been everlastingly in *Paradise*, and would have continued in pleasure without death; so the Covenant of Works in the Nature of it, was an everlasting Covenant, and consequently, this is no peculiar Priviledge of the Covenant of Grace.

Answer, For Answer to the Question, however the Covenant of Works was treated with Man in time, and though it be in the order of Nature. prior to the Covenant of Grace, yet in the counsel of God, the Covenant of Grace is before the Covenant of Works: The Reason of it is, that which famous Doctor *Twisse* lays as a principle, that a rational Agent intends first the end, and then the midses; as a Man going to War, intends first the end, and then the midses; the Covenant of Grace being the great end, in making the Covenant of works, that by it he might make way for the end the Covenant of Grace; the Covenant of Grace is first in his purpose, in regard it is the great End of the Covenant of Works, and he intended the end before the midses. 2ly, Whatever the Covenant of Works should have been, is a Question of which the Scripture is silent: Yet, the Covenant of Works, if *Adam* had not broken it, would have been Everlasting, but being broken, it is laid aside; so that it is far from being Everlasting, in regard of Duration, that it is supposed that Man stood but few hours, and it was broken, and he was lyable to the Penalty; so the Covenant of Grace is not only Everlasting, but the only everlasting Covenant. So, having cleared, that this Covenant is Everlasting, I will take only this Note, and handle it this day.

Doctrine, That the Covenant with Believers is an Everlasting Covenant; so ye find it frequently called in Scripture, *Isaiah* 55. 3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.* So Ezekiel 16. 60.

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Nevertheleſs, I will remember my Covenant with thee, in the days of thy youth, and will eſtabliſh unto thee an everlaſting Covenant. It is frequently called an everlaſting Covenant in Scripture; I ſhall not need to inſiſt to prove ſo well a known Truth, but to make way to the Doctrinal Part, I would Doctrinally enquire into two things.

Firſt, In what reſpects the Covenant of Grace is an everlaſting Covenant, 2*ly*. I would enquire into the Grounds, why the Lord in his making a Covenant, would not have it a Tack for a Leaſe of Years, but an abſolute Gift, and an everlaſting one.

Qu. Firſt, In what reſpects it is an everlaſting Covenant?

Anſwer, For clearing of this, I deſire ye may notice theſe two Generals. 1. It is an everlaſting Covenant, in regard of Duration, it is from Eternity to Eternity; it is remarkable, *Pſal.* 103. 17 *The mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him*; it is as antient as God, and will endure as long as God, for all his Decrees and Purpoſes are everlaſting and eternal, and an Eternity hath no beginning nor end, this Covenant was treated with the Mediator from all Eternity, and will endure with him to all Eternity. But 2*ly*, Take notice of this in the General, that when God tranſacted the Covenant with Man, he intended not to ſet him a Tack or Leaſe, with reſerves, but he intended to make an abſolute irrevockable Gift: Therefore, it is expreſt in the New Teſtament, not by way of Tack, having a number of Clauſes in it, but by way of Teſtament, *It is the Gift of a Teſtator*, ratified by his death, and none can revock his Will; No, he cannot revock it himſelf: So that in effect it is not a Tack or a Leaſe made of Pardon, or Peace, or a Heaven, in the Covenant with many reſerves, but it is an abſolute Gift, like the Gift in the Teſtament, that cannot be revocked by any, no by him that made it; which will appear if ye notice three things.

Firſt, Take notice, that when God tranſacted the Covenant himſelf, and his Son, he in a manner, bound up his own hands, from ever revocking the Gifts contain'd in the Covenant; If once he give them, then he cannot revock them, *Pſal* 89. *If his children forſake my Law, and walk not in my Judgements; If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments, then will I viſite their tranſgreſſions, with*

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the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes: Nevertheleſs, my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail, my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Mark there, he binds up his own hands, he hath made the Gift ſo abſolute, that though he be provocked, he will not break; it is not like a Tack, made betwixt a Land-lord and a Tenent; that if the Land-lord be forefaulted, the Tack will fall; he hath paſt from all theſe Articles and Clauſes, and bound up his own hands, that if my Children offend, I will correct them with the rod of men, but my Covenant I will not break. 2*ly*, I deny not but there are conditions in the Covenant, but the Man that gets the Gift, cannot fail in the condition, the Covenant cannot fail on that ſcore. Why? As the condition is required, ſo it is alſo promiſed; God hath not left it to the freedom of Man's will, to repent or not to repent, to believe or not to believe, but he hath ſecured it in the Covenant, as a Maſter ſetting a Tack to a Tennent, ſhould bind him to ſuch a Farm, and in the mean time, oblige himſelf to give him as much as to pay him; If there be a failzie there, it muſt be on God's part, and not on theirs. 3*ly*, For ſecuring the condition, take notice, that there are in the Covenant clauſes of Pardon; Nay, not only ſo, but on ſuppoſition, that a believer ſhould fail in the condition, his failling makes not the Covenant to be altered, the Covenant remains firm; No change in the Elect, can alter the Covenant; indeed a change in God would do it, which were impoſſible, but though we believe not, yet he abides faithful: And here comes the Covenant to be ſecured, to be everlaſting, that there are Promiſes of the Condition, and there is more, there is pardon of failings in the Condition, the caſe is, as in a Marriage-covenant every failing looſes not the Marriage, it may have an influence on an interruption in the Marriage-fellowſhip, but not on the Marriage-knot; the caſe is ſo in this Covenant, it is almoſt impoſſible for a Believer to fail in the condition, except God fail in his Promiſe, which is altogether impoſſible; And though there were a failzie in the Condition, yet it breaks not the Covenant, it ſtands firm notwithſtanding of their unbelief, this is no *Antinomian* Doctrine,

ctrine, but it is ſolid, and well grounded upon Proteſtant Principles againſt *Papiſts* and *Arminians*.

Having premiſed theſe two Generals, I will offer four things that will evidence the Covenant to be everlaſting.

Firſt, Its everlaſting, in regard of the Foundation, and ground on which it ſtands, there are three principal grounds on which the Covenant ſtands. 1. Its founded on the decree of God's Election, his eternal purpoſe of glorifying the Elect, whom he hath choſen: ſo that it is collateral with the Election, and there can never be a change in that except he alter his Decree firſt, and then the Covenant; if once he take a perſon in Covenant, before he caſt him out of the Covenant again, he muſt of an Elect make him a Reprobat. 2*ly*. The Covenant is founded on his Love; *with an everlaſting love have I loved thee, therefore with loving kindneſs will I draw thee.* 3*ly*. The Covenant of Grace is founded upon the Covenant of Redemption, the Father hath Tranſacted with the Son from all eternity, and that cannot be altered then, and far leſs now, after the Son hath performed all his part of the Tranſaction, what he had engaged to in the Covenant of Redemption, it could never be altered, and far leſs now after the death and paſſion of Chriſt, and conſequently, the Covenant of Grace and Redemption, muſt ſtand and fall together, ſo it cannot chuſe but be an everlaſting Covenant. 2*ly*. Its an everlaſting Covenant, in regard its one and the ſame without the leaſt change in all ages, from the beginning to the end, there is not one Article of it at all altered ſince the day it was publiſhed in *Paradiſe* to *Adam*, nor will be altered till the laſt man that will be born in the World; there is nothing more reeling than the caſe of a Believer, ſometimes they are left under challenges for guiltineſs, ſometimes they are abhoring themſelves in duſt and aſhes, ſometimes they have peace, and ſometimes they have terror, there is nothing more reeling, than Providences are; God is ſometimes ſmiling, ſometimes correcting, but in the midſt of all theſe reelings, the Covenant remains the ſame; there is not the leaſt jot or ſyllable of it that comes to be altered as it was publiſhed in *Adams* days, when he publiſhed it in the *Garden*, its continued until now, and will continue until the laſt man that ſhal be born

upon the Earth; and whatever reelings be in Providence, the Covenant is always the ſame; even as it is with the Sun, ſince the day it was made it is ſtill the ſame, there hath been many Winter and Summer days, many ſhowers and blinks, yet the Sun hath not loſed one hour of its Courſe, in its riſing and ſettingthat it had at the beginning; nor is it an hair-breadth diminiſhed of its light, for all the light he hath given, nor is he weary with runing his courſe, but he comes forth in the morning as a Bridegroom, and as a ſtrong man that rejoyces to run a race: So the Covenant, amidſt all the Providences, and diverſities of changes, its ſtill the ſame, and will be ſo, until the laſt man that ſhal be born upon the Earth. 3*ly*. Its called everlaſting, in regard all the fundamental priviledges of the Covenant are everlaſting; effectual calling being once gotten, it remains; the gifts and calling of God are without repentance; there is the pardon of ſin in the Covenant, and that once being had, can never again be called in queſtion, Jer. 31. 34. *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſins no more, I will blot out their iniquities for my names ſake*; Mark there, *I will blot out their iniquities*, and if once they be blotted out, *I will remember them no more*; if I once pardon Debt, I will not again remember it; therefore he is ſaid, *to caſt our iniquities in the bottom of the ſea, and I will caſt them behind my back, and I will bury their ſins*; Importing as much as if once one get pardon of ſin, its everlaſting, and its that which he will never revock, nor keep up a quarrel for the ſin he hath pardoned: Nay more, the Covenant becomes everlaſting, in that it remains even in death, the Covenant remains with our duſt in the Grave; Its very remarkable, when Chriſt tells his Diſciples of *Lazarus* death, he tells them, *our friend Lazarus ſleeps*, he ſays not, he that was our friend, but he that *is our friend*; the Covenant remains with our duſt in the Grave; all the Tyes among men, they are looſed by death: the Woman is freed from the Law of her Husband, and they remain no longer Husband and Wife; the Relation betwixt Husband and Wife, betwixt Parents and Children and kinsmen, they are all made for time, and time lays them in the Grave; it is not ſo in this everlaſting Covenant; it remains even in death and never parts with us, until

it poſſeſs us in an everlaſting Crown; ſo all the fundamental priviledges are everlaſting, its everlaſting union, its everlaſting pardon, and everlaſting peace; and the Covenant is never fulfilled, until it poſſeſs us of a Crown.

4*ly*. Its everlaſting, in regard the parties covenanting are everlaſting, not only hath this holden true, conſidering the principal Parties, the Father and Chriſt, but even Believers and their ſeed, they are both everlaſting, and every particular Member that is taken in Covenant, is an everlaſting Party in this Covenant; it may be, ſome of them, thirty years, or thirty two years, will open their Grave, and they muſt ly down in it, but even there they ceaſe not to be Parties in the Covenant: its remarkable, Mat. 22. *I am the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; from which he proves the Reſurrection, the meaning of that place is, *Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob* are living, or elſe the Covenant could not be everlaſting, *Abraham* is living in regard of his Soul, his Body is living in regard of the Reſurrection at the great day, for the Covenant is made with his Duſt: however it were hard to find his Duſt, yet he is conſidered as a living Party in the Covenant, yea, even his fleſh is an everlaſting Party in the Covenant, although it be diſperſed into duſt, and the Fowls and wild beaſts carry it away, yet ſays *Job*, *with theſe eyes, and no other for me, ſhall I ſee God.* This proves the Party to be everlaſting, every Believer is an everlaſting Party in the Covenant; ſo that taking either the grounds on which the Covenant ſtands, the Decree of Election and Love, and the Covenant of Redemption; or conſidering the conſtantneſs of the Covenant, amidſt all the changes of Providence, and the caſe of Believers like the Sun, that is the ſame Winter and Summer, or conſidering the fundamental priviledges of the Covenant, all of which are everlaſting; Its everlaſting Election on which it is founded, and everlaſting Calling, everlaſting Pardon, and an everlaſting Heaven; but the Parties are alſo everlaſting, not only in regard of their Head, but *Abraham* is a Party in the Covenant, and God is his God, which is the Sum of the covenant after *Abraham's* duſt can ſcarce be found in the Grave.

I will ſpeak a word to the ſecond thing that I propoſed

ſed the grounds why the Lord would have this covenant to be an everlaſting Covenant (1.) In the contrivement and drawing up of the Covenant of Grace, the Lord deſigns the exaltation of his Grace, and that was to the praiſe of the glory of his Grace, as the Apoſtle words it in the *Epheſians*, now if there be never ſo great things promiſed, he hath promiſed, *he will take away the heart of ſtone, and give you an heart of fleſh*; but had the caſe been the next day, that he had ſaid, I will take away the heart of fleſh, and give you an heart of ſtone, what would that have ſignified for the exalting of his Grace? Had he been one day giving an heart of fleſh, and another day taking it away, wherein would his Grace have been exalted by ſinners, unleſs it had been by, I will give you an heart of fleſh, and I will never take away your effectual calling? Had there been no more to debaſe Grace, but the changeableneſs of it, it had been enough: therefore God would have his Covenant everlaſting, and herein he would have a diſtinction betwixt the Covenant that was made of Grace, and that which ſtood ſtood on the free will of man, the principal ground on which the Covenant of works ſtood, was free will; and in that ſtate he had Free Grace, yet it depended on his will; but herein is Grace exalted, in that he cannot alter his Covenant, no, therein lyes the exaltation of Grace, & the difference betwixt the covenant ſtanding on the Free will of man, tho perfect, and the covenant founded on Grace & Chriſt, that the one is everlaſting, and the other endured but for a few hours; ſo that it is to the praiſe and glory of his Grace, and the exalting it above all his other Attributes, that he hath made this covenant an everlaſting Covenant, its not that he is payed for it on theſe Terms, its not from merit, nor purchaſe, that he hath fulfilled this covenant, but meerly to the praiſe of the glory of his Grace in Chriſt Jeſus, that the Covenant is made ſo everlaſting, that though God (to ſpeak with reverence) and man encline to alter it, they cannot alter it. 2*ly*. The Lord made it thus everlaſting, that Believers might have ſtrong conſolation; its remarkable, the allowance of joy in the covenant, its full joy; *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, that your joy may be full*; they are bidden *rejoyce evermore*, and *rejoyce alway*, and no wonder we be bidden rejoyce, when there is full joy allowed

in the covenant; nay there is not only consolation, but *strong consolation*, Heb. 6. 18. *God hath confirmed it by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, that they might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us*; and the Truth is, its a Principle of *Arminians*, they tell a Believer may have grace to day, and they may have the Devil to morrow; they may be effectually called to day, and the Child of the Devil to morrow; houghs all consolation, if they were in never so sweet a temper to day, they cannot tell but they may be a child of the Devil to morrow, and what peace and comfort would there be, if the Covenant were not everlasting? So when we have searched all the grounds, why God would have this Covenant everlasting, they are summed up in this, in exalting the Grace of his Son, and affording strong consolation to them that have taken themselves to the Covenant. So ye see the Covenant is everlasting not by way of Tack for so many years, but it is an absolute Gift, and the Father hath not only put in reserves into it, but he hath absolutly bound up his hand, and confirmed it by two immutable things, wherein it is impossible for him to alter, which is his Oath and the blood of his Son; so that now it stands on such Terms, as (to speak with reverence to the Majesty of God) its impossible for him to alter it.

SERMON XXIV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

IT is a sweet Observation, that some have made on that word *Everlasting*, as it is applyed to the Covenant, taking everlasting for a proper Eternity; its a peculiar Attribute of God, agreeable neither to Angels nor Men, and yet God hath given this Attribute to the Covenant. Its an eternal Covenant; God puts in a Letter of his

own Name in *Abrahams* Name, he puts in the Letter *Jehovah*, he was first called *Abram* and then he puts in this Letter, and calls him *Abraham*; he puts in a Letter of his own Name, *Elohi*, in *Jacobs* name, he was first called *Jacob*, and then he calls him *Israel*; but in the Covenant, He puts in one of his own essential Attributes, and that is *Eternal*; & this could neither be said of Angels, nor of *Abraham*, nor *Jacob*, it could be said of none of them, that they were Eternal, but the Covenant is an eternal Covenant, its from everlasting to everlasting, and this hath a considerable weight in it. I followed in what respects the Covenant was everlasting, and why God would have it everlasting, he intended to exalt his Grace, and give strong consolation to his Elect, I will now follow the practical improvement of it, in two Uses, and in clearing of three Questions, which I conceive, will abridge the things necessar, in this property of the covenant that it is everlasting.

Use 1. *First*, Is it an everlasting Covenant, it serves for Instruction, in these six or seven particulars. 1. Then there is a great Mystery in the Covenant, of all things that Divines and Philosophers write of, its the most difficult thing to take up Eternity, they write many things about Eternity that they cannot explain, as when they write of the nature of it, they say, that it is *tota simul & perfecta possessio*, they say it is a duration, and *altogether a duration*, and we cannot conceive of that; they say, its without beginning, and we cannot comprehend a thing that is without beginning, let our imaginations run back millions of millions, we cannot comprehend it; when one falls upon the thoughts of Eternity, he is like a man wading a deep water, he that is fardest in, is sooneſt over the head, & herein Schollars are drowned; the reason is, a finit thing cannot comprehend an infinit, more than a Cockle-shell can comprehend the Sea; so that which is Eternal, is a mystery, and the Covenant is Eternal, and consequently is a mystery, its an eternal Covenant, it began in Eternity, and will continue unto Eternity; so then its a great deep, take not only the Truths of it, God and Man in one Person, a Virgin, and yet bearing a Son, and many such things; or take the practice of it; I many time have pitied Ranters, but I

have not thought it ſtrange that they take the greateſt Myſteries of the Covenant for fancies; a Believer may try, where natural mens Diabolical conjectures lyes, for the Covenant is a great Myſtery, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*, and no wonder, all natural men ſtand and demure, and at length rant; and reſolve to hazard on the things that are ſeen, and caſt at the Covenant, for its a great Myſtery. 2*ly*. If the Covenant be everlaſting and eternal, it informs us, who was the Author and contriver of it, and of whom we hold all the priviledges of it, it was very remarkable, when the Diſciples asked Chriſt, if they ſhould pay tribute to *Ceſar*? Says Chriſt, *ſhew me a peny, whoſe image and ſuperſcription is this*, ſays he? They ſay, *Ceſars, give unto Ceſar the things that be Ceſars, and to Chriſt the things that be Chriſts*: So that Eternity is no part of our Image, any thing the property whereof is eternal, hath no part of our Image or ſuperſcription, for we are but of yeſterday, and we know not what will be to morrow; and any thing that is eternal, we have no influence on it; and if the Covenant be properly eternal, as evident it is, then all the glory of contriving, and ordering, and the pureneſs of it, we have no influence on them, for we are but Thieves, If either we ſteal or reſet any thing that is eternal, we came but yeſterday out of our mothers womb, and to morrow we muſt return to the Duſt, and be laid in the Grave. 3*ly*, It informs us, if the Covenant be eternal and everlaſting, that as we were not the Authors of it, ſo we were not the procurers of it; for it was before we had a beeing, it was when we were nothing, and there is none of us will queſtion, but in Eternity we were nothing, and when we were nothing, what could we contribute, or merit, or purchaſe from God? For all the tenor of the Covenant, if it be everlaſting, ſpeaks out love in God, and Grace in God, but it cannot ſpeak out any thing in us, except we could procure ſomething when we were nothing; now we are to be informed of if it be everlaſting, its a myſtery, it hath not our Image and Superſcription, we were not the Authors of it, we did nothing to procure it, unleſs we ſhould ſay that we could merit, when we were nothing. 4*ly*. If the Covenant be everlaſting, it informs of the great Obligation, that we have to the Mediator of the Cove-

the Truth is, we might have had a quarrel with him, he acting in our room, though he had drawn it in never ſo excellent terms, if he had not made it ſicker, we would have thought him like a Work-man, that ſet the Nail in a right place, but did not rove it, and make it ſicker, excellently is the Covenant drawn, but if he had forgotten to roove the Nail, and make it ſicker, that if we repent we ſhal be pardoned; if we believe, we ſhal be ſaved? Theſe are eaſie Terms, but if it were ſo drawn, that we were in a ſtate of Grace the day, and out of it to morrow, we ſhould be pardoned to day, and might be damned to morrow, we might have had ſome quarrel againſt him, that ſtood in our room, that the Covenant, though it were free and gracious, yet it were not ſicker and rooved; but ſo excellently was it rooved and ordered, that among the reſt of the properties of it, its everlaſting. There is a very great obligation to the Mediator, that when he had modelled and ordered the Covenant, with the greateſt freedom and fulneſs of Grace, he rooved the Nail, and made the Covenant on theſe Terms everlaſting; when he had obtained of his Father, all the Terms of the Covenant, he would have in that in it that its everlaſting, and that theſe Terms ſhould never be altered again. *5ly.* It informs us, on what grounds the perſeverance of the Saints ſtands, we ſay, Its not our skill to guide Grace, we ſay not that its from the Nature of Grace, but we build it eſpecially upon the perpetuity of the Covenant, the Covenant is an everlaſting Covenant, the Mediator hath ſo ordered this Covenant, that if once we be in Covenant, we can never be out of it, and he hath rooved the Nail ſo, that Satan can never draw it, with all his Hammers and Inſtruments that he can bring, thereon ſtands the perſeverance of the Saints; that is the thing that can never fail them, if once they be married they are ever married, and if once they be in covenant, they are always in covenant, for its an everlaſting covenant; But add *6ly.* If the covenant be thus everlaſting, ſee from it, the difference betwixt the mercies of the covenant of Grace, and the mercies of the covenant of nature; I confeſs there are ſome things in the covenant of nature that they may ſay of them, that there is ſuch a covenant properly, the Ordinances of the

Sun and Moon, the Rain falling on the juſt and the unjuſt, the ſhining of the Sun and Moon perſevere; but theſe natural things, how changeable are they? We have health to day, and may be ſick to morrow; there are few, but in a little ye will ſcarcely know their faces to be what they were, there is a moth in their body, and a thief in their ſtrength: many time our humours are like our beauties, we loſe the things we love; we find our Relations diſſolve, the Friends we had are dead, the Enemies we had, and the things of time, like a wheel, are conſtantly reeling and turning about; and there is nothing, but a few moneths produce another face than it had, but it is not ſo with theſe mercies of *David* in the Covenant, they are everlaſting, its not ſo with our Election, our effectual calling, our union with Chriſt, its not ſo with any fundamental priviledge of the covenant; ye that are conſtantly complaining, and finding the reelings of the World, learn like a child that is weaned from the Pape, its not that the Mother intends to hunger the child, but that ſhe would have it feeding on ſtronger meat; the reaſon why ſo many are complaining of the bitterneſs of the things of time, and the changes of them, their health, their ſtrength, and their friends, are not what they were; its not that ye ſhould want them, but we would have you ſeek them in the Covenant, and the ſure mercies of *David*; there is a conſiderable difference betwixt them, and the things of Time, for whoever builds on the things of Time, they are drawing their waters out of the Gutters, and not out of the ſpring, but theſe are founded on an everlaſting Covenant. 7*ly*. If the Covenant be everlaſting, then it informs us of the Wiſdom and Skill of the guide of them, that make choice of the Covenant; there is hardly Wiſdom in the choice of other things, they will not laſt, variable and changeable Humours, and variable and changeable Things, that every day fade; they are not *Fanaticks*, that take them to the Covenant, the mercies of the Covenant are great mercies; for though they were ſmall, yet they are everlaſting, and better long little than ſoon nothing; and there is nothing in Time everlaſting, but like a Waſter, they ſoon ſpend and waſte thy heart, thy ſenſe, thy Fleſh will fail thee, thy Rea-

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ſon will turn to Melancholly, and thy young Ones will look on thee, as one that hath ſcarce the exerciſe of Reaſon, all theſe things will reel to and fro in the World, and we muſt expect that it will be ſo; but this everlaſting Covenant is as the Sun, it will ay riſe at its appointed hours, and go to at them, and there will be no ſtop of its Courſe, its no *Fanaticiſm*, to go on the ſureſt Grounds that ever men followed, that take them to this Covenant, and reſolve to hang both their ill and their good on it, that is the firſt uſe of the Point.

Uſe 2. The ſecond uſe of the Point, Is this Covenant an everlaſting covenant? then Chriſtian, labour to improve it as an everlaſting Covenant, make uſe of this Property of the Covenant, that it is everlaſting. And here I will offer you five Caſes that truly take in the moſt part of the exerciſe of Believers, all of which come to have ſome anſwer, in this property of the Covenant, that its everlaſting. 1. It comes to be an ordinar caſe, and the improvement of the everlaſtingneſs of the Covenant, it is a good anſwer to it, I ſay, it comes to be an ordinar caſe, I am guilty, I cannot feed on the Covenant, for I know the thing of my ſelf, that no other knows; this Property of the Covenant, takes away this challenge, if God had made this Covenant ſo, as he made the Covenant of Works, *in the day thou eats, thou ſhalt ſurely die*, this covenant is broken, but the Mediator contrived it to be everlaſting which would never have been everlaſting, if ay when we were guilty, the Covenant ſhould be altered; no, under all the challenges that thou has, if ever thou was in Covenant, and haſt the Marks that were given the laſt Sabbath Day, of God's making the Covenant with thee, there thou muſt continue in the Covenant, or thou muſt ſcrape out of the Covenant, everlaſting Covenant; no, this Property of the Covenant when I come to the laſt *verſe*, and there ſhew you, how you ſhall anſwer your Challenges, ye will hear that guiltineſs does not caſt out of the Covenant, for if that were, it were not everlaſting. 2*ly*. There is a ſecond caſe wherein it is to be improven, and it is very frequent, I am a poor croſſed Body, and ſcarce have Bread, and either I am not in the Covenant, or he hath broken it. But I ſay alſo, that this is anſwered in this, that its everlaſting; I like a word of Maſter *Dickſons*, he

he ſays, it is ordinar for perſons to treat with God in Covenant, they conform the Covenant to their caſe, but they will not conform their caſe to the Covenant, ſuppoſe there ſhould be never ſo many croſſes in thy caſe, yet thou art to rule thy caſe by the Covenant, and not to bring the Covenant to thy caſe, its ordinar for thee, to tell thy neighbour, either I am not in the Covenant with him, or elſe its broken between God and me; but ſuppoſe thou ſhould go to thy bed ſupperleſs, and the next morrow have a greater croſs, and knows not what to get to thy Breakfaſt, thou art to bring thy caſe to the Covenant, but bring not the Covenant to thy caſe. *Abraham*, when he is to offer up *Iſaac* on mount *Moriah* in a burnt Sacrifice, no body that would have met him, but they would have ſaid, God hath broken the covenant with him, *in thy ſeed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*, *Abraham* knew well, that out of the aſhes of *Iſaac*, God could fulfil his Promiſes, he reduces the aſhes of *Iſaac* to the covenant, reduce ay thy caſe to the covenant, but bring not the covenant to thy caſe. 3*ly*. There may be another great improvement of it, and its this, I am frequently challenged and deſerted, its not poverty nor ſickneſs that I complain of, but of challenges and deſertions, and I am undoubtedly out of the Covenant, it is not everlaſting to me, for I am challenged & deſerted. The Husband may go from home, and bide long away, and come home angry, but that looſes not the Marriage tye, the Marriage Union remains: neither does his abſence, nor his quarrels prove the Marriage to be looſed, the Covenant, the marriage Oath remains firm: its a ſore matter, that when we come under any exerciſe, we can never underſtand where we are, until our exerciſe comes to fundamental doubtings; its a ſweet complaint, my Husband is long away, and he is come home, but without a challenge to me, but its a ſore matter to come home with, he hath declared himſelf not to be my Husband, & che hath put me out of Doors, & he will give me no aliment, but he calls me a Whore. So that under theſe variety of Diſpenſations this property of the everlaſtingneſs of the Covenant, may be well improven; I am guilty, if thou take that, as putting thee out of the Covenant, thou may put out that word, everlaſting Covenant out of the Bible, ſome

ſome are croſſed and deſerted, but the perpetuity and everlaſtingneſs of the Covenant, runs like the Sun, and keeps its courſe in a direct line, in Winter as well as in Summer. 4*ly*. Some are troubled with this, what ever my caſe be, I think I will not perſevere; but thou art miſtaken, thou knows not the Tenor of the Covenant, its everlaſting, all thy Experiences, and all the Elevations of Spirit thou haſt had, and all the things thou haſt had, that thou thinks looks like blinks with Jeſus; there is no wedding, but thou may be an Adulterer, or an Idolater, but the Covenant ſecures all, its true, the fundamental priviledges ſecures thee, as to them, but it ſecures thee not from very groſs ſins, but that which ſecures all, is founded upon the Decrees of God, and the Covenant of Redemption, its impoſſible for him to lie, and to be unfaithful, and to deny himſelf, therefore the Covenant ſtands firm, if thou be at, I know not what to do, if Tryal or Popery come, I will deny him; but if thou be in Covenant, the Covenant is everlaſting, and not only the Devil and his Angels, cannot caſt thee out of the Covenant, but to ſpeak it with reverence, God hath made it everlaſting and unalterable for Himſelf. 5*ly*. There is a fifth Difficulty that many ly under, ſome may ſay, I am near Death, I find my ſelf hanging over the Grave, I find theſe Legs, and this Back, and this Head, things that will not long ſubſiſt, I muſt go to the place where there is no mention of the Covenant, no ſpeaking of his loving kindneſs: but thou art miſtaken, its not like the Covenant betwixt Husband and Wife, if the one of them die, they may take another, the caſe is not ſo, if the Worms ſhould deſtroy this Body, and the Birds ſhould fly away with a bit of thy Body, that is left above the Ground, the Covenant with that bit, its the Fathers pleaſure, that I ſhould loſe nothing, that I ſhould not loſe a Nail of a Toe, for the Covenant remains with thy duſt, for it is an everlaſting Covenant; I think our ignorance of the Covenant is the great ground of the moſt part of our trouble, if we underſtood it, and the Properties of it, we might have a more hopeful, and cheerful life, in our walking with Jeſus than we have. I would here clear two or three Queſtions; and but name them. 1. Readily ſome may ſay, this day is very ſweet to hear, that Chriſt hath rooved the

Nail

Nail ſo, as it cannot be drawn again, if once we be in Covenant, we will never be out of it again, and the Father hath bound up his own hands, as it were, that its impoſſible for him to do otherwiſe, therefore ſome may Object.

Queſtion, 1. Can this Covenant be everlaſting, for of all the cheangeable Providences that ever we ſaw, perſons that are in Covenant meets with, they are croſſed, challenged, deſerted, and rejoycing one day, and in the duſt the next day, ye will ſcarcely find them in one Frame?

Anſwer. I like the Obſervation well, that a certain Divine hath, on the eighty ninth *Pſalm*, *If his children forſake my Law, then I will viſit their ſins with rods, but my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, my Covenant will I not break, I have ſworn that I will not lie unto David, his ſeed ſhall endure for ever, and his Throne as the Sun before me, it ſhall be eſtabliſhed as the Moon for ever*; why are theſe two put in, the Sun and the Moon. Ye ſhall never obſerve a change of the Sun, its ay alike great, but the Moon *Aſtronomers* write of it, will have fourteen or fifteen ſeveral Forms in one Month, it hath every night almoſt a new Form, and they give names to every ſeveral Form; but the meaning is this, its as much as the Covenant that I ſwear to *David*, ſhall be as uncheangable a thing as the Sun, and yet ſhall be as changeable as the Moon, that returns ay when its full Moon, it ſhall be changeable and unchangeable; theſe that come in Covenant with him, may ſay, as to all Fundamental Priviledges, it is as the Sun, and as to the things built on theſe Foundations, its as the Moon, as to the variety of caſes, it will be as the Moon, that will have twelve ſeveral Forms in one month, and yet be unchangeable as the Sun; and ye muſt not conclude, that ye are not in Covenant, and that its not everlaſting, your Peace, joy, liberty in Duties, and Covenant clearing, may be as the Moon, and your Covenant caſe may be as the Sun. 2*ly*. All the changes that falls out in thy Lot in time that are like the Moon, they at length terminat in theſe Fundamental Priviledges; its remarkable, that for all the changes that the Moon hath, once in a Month its full Moon, its true, it will not bide long at that; they that are in Covenant, all their changes they at length terminat in their Fundamental Priviledges which

which is a remarkable thing, their peace, their joy, is not Fundamental, yet it ſhall be as the Moon, all the Alterations in the Covenant, they are at length Terminat in the Foundation.

Queſtion, Secondly, it may be Objected againſt this everlaſtingneſs of the Covenant, is not this a Doctrine tending to ſecurity and prophanity, to ſay, one is in Covenant, and never out of it, doth not this lay a Cod to Security, do we not ſing folks a ſleep, that readily comes to produce old experiences, and are now taken and carried away with *Scotlands* back-ſlidings, and to tell them, its an everlaſting Covenant, and its impoſſible to alter, lays not this a Cod to Security?

Anſwer. I will cloſe all this comfortable Truth, by telling you theſe three things. 1. The Secure and Prophane, its almoſt, and more nor ſuſpicious, they are not in Covenant, if one be Secure and Prophane, they may do as I have ſometimes told you in preaching, like a man coming by an Apple tree, and he claughts a Branch of the Apple tree, and lays it up in his Coffer, and thinks that he will have Apples of it, but it wants the Root, and it will neither have Leaves nor Apples; ſome ſay, that they have gotten a Promiſe, I am afraid, that they have but a riven Branch from the Root; if ye be fallen Secure, Prophane, and negligent, and yet are telling your neighbours, I have gotten a Promiſe long ſince, ye have gotten a Branch, and that ye have claught off the Root, and its without the Root, and will neither bear Flouriſhes nor Apples. 2. This Doctrine tends not to ſecurity, nor prophanity, in regard all that are in this Everlaſting Covenant, they receive Influences, that keeps them from ſecurity and prophanity; I will not ſay, but they may have their Winters, *David* had it for a year, it was a year after he went in to *Bathſheba*, and murthered *Uriah*, before the Prophet comes to him: The Spouſe is made to ſing *The winter is over and paſt, the Summer is come, the time of the ſpringing of herbs is come*; The Spring muſt come if thou be in Covenent with him, therefore it opens no Door for Security or Prophanity, for they that are in the Covenant with him, its impoſſible for them to continue in Security, *I will put my fear in their hearts, and they ſhall not depart from me*. 3*ly*. This Doctrine hath no tendency to

Security

Security; for ordinarly these that are in the Covenant, if they will not be awakened by the Word, the Lord will awaken them by the Rod; I have told you, that Christ hath three Posts he sends after Believers, there is his Word, and his Rod, and if none of these two will prevail, he will send his Spirit, and that will prevail; they that are in the Covenant, cannot get leave to live in Security and Prophanity, if the Word will not waken them, the Rod shall do it; and if neither of these two do it, the Spirit shall do it; so if any shall say, I am secure, and am living in Security, thou may go and dash thy head against a stone, but this Covenant is Everlasting, and it cannot be altered, we shall be judged by it in the day of our appearing.

SERMON XXV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

IN the right up-taking of the Covenant, we must not search into the Nature of it, but into the Properties of it, three whereof are expressed in this *verse*, its *everlasting*, its *ordered in all things*, and its *sure*. The first of these I spoke to the last day, that it was Everlasting, and have shewed you many things about it Doctrinally and Practically.

I come to the second Property, *Ordered in all things*, this, though ye do not at first see through it, yet ye may see it afterwards, having a great deal of Marrow in it, and its a very material Property of the Covenant: the word in the *Hebrew*, *Vehalmu*, *Montanus* renders it, *dispositum in omnibus*. *Junius* renders it, *ordinatum in omnibus*. The *Septuagint*, or the seventy Interpreters, Translate it by a word borrowed from a General Marshal in an Army putting all his Forces in a Military Order; *its well ordered, as a well Marshalled Army*, wherein every one is in their proper posture; and so is the Covenant ordered

the meaning is every thing in the Covenant, is fitly disposed, or appointed, or ordered. And for clearing of it, ye must take notice, that the intention of the Spirit of God, in speaking by *David* that its fitly ordered, is not only to shew, that there is an excellent method, and sorting of all the parts of the Covenant, but that it is excellently sorted and ordered, in order to the great end, for which the Covenant was made, to advance the Glory of God, and the Salvation of the Elect, which are the two great ends, for which its made, and herein it differs from the Covenant of Works, for though its not denyed, but it be well ordered, and fitted, yet it neither contributes so much, nor was it so conduceable, to exalt God, and bring the Elect to Glory, as the Covenant of Grace is; which I might let you see in many particulars, it was well ordered in a way suitable to that Dispensation, but not in all things, in a way tending to exalt God, and the salvation of the Elect, as the Covenant of Grace is; to be brief, this is a very special property of the Covenant of Grace, and a distinguishing one from the Covenant of Works, that its ordered in all things, not abstractly, but in order, and in reference to the end, which is to exalt God, and to promote the salvation of the Elect. So this property of the Covenant is considerable, as it is an everlasting Covenant, so its Marshelled, and Ordered, and disposed as an Army, in an excellent posture for a Victory. This being the meaning of it, I will make two Observations, and follow them in several following Sermons; the first of them I will but Name, but shall God willing, dwell on the second.

The first is this, That such as would have consolation from the Covenant, must observe the order and method, and disposal of the contents of the Covenant. *obj.* I will take this, that the Covenant is excellently and singularly ordered, in all things relating to the exalting of the Father, and the Mediator, and the salvation of the Elect.

Doctrine first. *Such as would have peace, as* David *had at his death from the Covenant, are to consider the order of the Covenant*; so doth *David* here, when he is rejoycing, among his last Acts, from the Covenant that God had made with him; he considered it as a Covenant ordered in all things, these that take not up the right order

of

of the Covenant, and the mothod of it, can never have ſweetneſs, nor peace, nor conſolation from the Covenant.

For confirming and clearing this to you, I deſire ye may take notice of theſe three things. 1. God, who is the God of Order, and not of confuſion, (for ſo the Scripture calls Him) he is very exact in obſerving of Order; Obſerve him in natural Things in the Work of Creation, what an excellent Order he keeped. firſt to make Light, then to make other things, and then bring in man, when all things were Ordered for him: There is an excellent Order in his Providences, the Ordinance of the Sun and Moon, and all the Stars have an Order, by a Decree appointed them; its true, there will appear confuſion in his Providences, but they are but like the black and white Threeds in a Web, or like the diſcordant Strings of an Inſtrument of Muſick, they all move to make the Inſtrument play, or like the wheels of a Knock, though ſome of them move againſt other, yet they all tend to make the Knock ſtrick when the hour comes; ſo all his Providences, tend to the end he hath Decreed; he hath appointed Order in his Church, *Let all things be done decently, and in Order*; They that are for confuſion, are not for God, for God he is the God of Order, and not of confuſion; its true, *Papiſts* and *Prelats* would build on this, a multitude of humane Inventions; but Order is beſt keeped in the Church, when its according to the Scriptures, God is the God of Order, & Parity among Church-Officers hath no tendency to confuſion; for Chriſt would never have eſtabliſhed a Parity among his Apoſtles, if he had thought it confuſion: to be brief, God is the God of Order, and both in the Government of the World, and of the Church, he hath appointed an Order, and hath ſaid, *Mark them that walk diſorderly*; and they who are overturners of Scriptural Order, they become enemies to the God of Order, who hath not appointed his Church to be like a *Babel*, or a Maſs of confuſion; but He hath appointed Order, and all things to be done decently in it. 2*ly*. Take notice of this, that eſpecially he hath appointed an Order in the Covenant; to make no Order in the Covenant, and obſerve none is to make Chriſt the Miniſter of Sin; take, for Inſtance, there are ſome Promiſes in the Covenant, *I will blot out your iniquities, though*

they were as ſcarlet, I will make them white as wool, they ſhall be forgotten, and ſhall be no more remembred; and I will caſt them behind my back, and ſuch like; now, if one ſhould take theſe promiſes, & not obſerve the order of the Covenant, they make Chriſt the Miniſter of Sin; there cannot be a greater affront put upon him, than to think that he hath done any thing to encourage ſin, no honeſt man will take it well, to ſay to him, thou art an encourager of the wicked; take ſome promiſes of the Covenant, and let him go to them, and ſay, I have gotten a promiſe, but they obſerve not the order of the Covenant, *Shall we ſin, that grace may abound*, ſays *Paul*? *God forbid*. Now he that will take a promiſe of pardon, and feed on it, and rely on it, and not obſerve the order of the Covenant, he makes Chriſt the Miniſter of ſin, and Grace the occaſion and encourager of it. 3*ly*. There can be no true peace, except ye obſerve the order of the Covenant, in regard the Spirit, who is the Author of peace, makes it according to the method of the Covenant; its true, Sathan and our own hearts, will influence a kind of peace, but ordinarly they violat the order of the Covenant, their peace comes not in according to the method of the Covenant; when the Spirit gives peace, he is the Spirit of promiſe; when he comes and comforts, *He ſhall take of mine*, ſaith he, *and ſhew it you*, that is, he ſhal take of my Peace, and my Righteouſneſs, and give it to you; the Spirit in the influencing Peace, keeps the order of the Covenant; where ever there is peace, and the order of the Covenant not kept, it is ſuſpected to be either a peace of our own making, or a peace that the ſtrong man that keeps the Houſe gives; for when the ſtrong man keeps the Houſe, all is at peace; therefore, there can be no true peace from the Spirit, except we obſerve the order of the Covenant, which the Spirit of promiſe keeps: ſo this is an unqueſtionable Truth, Chriſt would be the Miniſter of ſin, and Grace would be the occaſion of ſin, and there would be no true peace, and God would not be the God of Order but of confuſion, except we obſerve the Order of the Covenant.

Uſe. 1. I will apply this a little for two Uſes, and ſo go forward. The firſt Uſe is, to reprove them that lay claim to Peace from the Covenant, but obſerve not the

Order

Order of the Covenant, I have gotten a Promise that he will blot out my iniquity, and what needs me to fear? But that peace is not from the Spirit, when it comes not in according to the Order of the Covenant; take a single Promise, and no more in the Covenant, and thou shal make God the God of confusion, and not of Order, and Christ the Minister of sin, and the Spirit to speak peace, not according to the Order of the Covenant: who ever they be, that will build on a particular promise, and not observe the Order of the Covenant, can have no sure Peace from it; who are they then that will plead the Covenant, and not observe the Order of the Covenant?

I will evidence this to you in five or six particulars.

1. When one pleads a promise in the Covenant, and hath no good, nor well grounded Interest in the Covenant, that is against the Order of the Covenant; the Covenant must first be ours, and then we plead the Promises of it; we come to plead the Farm of a Field that is not ours, and that we have not payed for; when we plead the Promises in the Covenant, and have no interest in the Mediator of the Covenant, we plead the Joynture, when we have not married the man; before we can have a right to the Apple, we must have a right to the Apple-tree. I will be thy God, before I give thee peace, or give thee pardon. This is the great substance and marrow of the Covenant, they cannot say that God is their God, and yet will take a promise of pardon, and of peace, they overturn the Order of the Covenant, readily many come and plead the Promises, and God may meet them with, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth?* Is the Covenant thine? Is the Mediator thine? Thou but breaks thy Neighbours Orchard, to go and take a Promise, and not in the Order of the Covenant, thou but steals it, and runs away with it, like a man that will break his Neighbours Orchard, and take away the Apples that grows on his Neighbours Tree; the Mediator is not thine, the Tree where the Apples grow is not thine, thou may take promises but thou overturns the Order of the Covenant, if thou take a promise, and not marry the Promise-maker.

2. They overturn the Order of the Covenant, who plead the Promises of the Covenant, but they forget the Commands of it, the Cove-

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nant is made up of Promises and Commands, the Commands are indeed fewer, they are indeed not so exactly prest, as in the Covenant of Works; now he that will plead a Promise, and go to it as his own, and tell his Neighbour, I have gotten a Promise, and in the mean time slights the Commands, he overturns the Order of the Covenant; if ever Peace come in by a promise, it must come in by a way suiting the Order of the Covenant. 3*ly*. They overturn the Order of the Covenant, that plead the conditional Promises of the Covenant, and have never prest the absolute Promises; the conditional promises, are promises of Peace, and Joy, and Pardon, and communion with God indeed; but as ye shal hear the absolute Promises, *I will take away the heart of stone, and give thee a heart of flesh*, must be accomplished before the promise of Pardon, the Lord hath promised Pardon, but hath promised it only to the penitent; he that prays for Pardon, and hath not repented, he tempts God, and God must overturn the Order of the Covenant, if he give Pardon before Repentance, the absolute promises must be fulfilled before the conditional: and he that will say, I have gotten peace, and pardon, or fellowship and communion with God, and yet hath never been effectually called, never knew what Faith and Repentance was, or the taking away a heart of stone, and giving a heart of flesh was; whatever promises he talk of, he hath overturned the Order of the Covenant, the first and absolute promises must be fulfilled before the conditional: So who ever says, give me peace, pardon, and communion the day in the Church, and yet hath never had the accomplishment of the absolute promises, he tempts God to overturn the Order of the Covenant. 4*ly*. They overturn the Order of the Covenant, that would plead some promises of the Covenant, and neglect others; the order of the covenant is, to whom one promise is fulfilled, all promises, though not in the same degree, are also to be fulfilled; there are several will plead, Lord forgive me my sin, give me pardon, but the promises of Sanctification, the promises of Influences for Holiness in the Life and Conversation, the pro[illegible]s of cleansing, they plead not these: They that go [illegible]ly to Christ for Justification, and forget him f[illegible]dom and Sanctification,

cetion, they indeed ſeek the Promiſes, but they would have him overturn the Order of the Covenant, and the Lord is peremptory, in keeping the Order of the Covenant, and he will not break it; for if he break it, he would overturn the whole contrivance of Grace; which we do when we plead the Promiſes, and forget the commands. *5ly*, They overturn the Order of the Covenant, who though they mind the Duties of the Covenant, yet they mind not all the commanded Duties in the Covenant; there is ſome Idol they would ſpare, that readily the Covenant binds him moſt againſt; its true when we enter in a perſonal Covenant with God, we bind againſt every corruption, but eſpecially our Idols; yet its ſtrange, that the thing that we incline eſpecially to ſpare, is that which we are moſt bound to wreſtle againſt; if it be Pride, Carnality, Earthly-mindedneſs, Senſuality, Laſciviouſneſs, that which in a perſonal Covenant, we are moſt bound to wreſtle againſt, is the thing we are moſt prone to ſpare, and he that does ſo, overturns the Order of the Covenant, the thing that thou does when thou art entred in a perſonal Covenant with God, if thou ſpare thy Idols, if God ſpare thee, he will overturn the Order of the Covenant. *6ly*. And laſtly, they overturn the order of the Covenant, who would have in the beginning, and when they lay the foundation of a Work, the thing that God hath promiſed them at the putting one of the Capeſtone: I have known ſeveral precious to God, that have concluded a work of Effectual Calling not to be real, Why? Say they, I have not that peace, and that joy in Believing, that I ought to have; but thou may believe twenty years, before thou have joy in Believing, ay when we would be at it; now we overturn the Order of the Covenant, if we do this; and the Truth is, as ye ſhal hear, the great reaſon why we have ſo little ſweetneſs from the Covenant, we obſerve not the Order and Method of the Covenant, we might have a great deal of ſweetneſs from the Promiſes that we want, and we might draw out of theſe Breaſts of conſolation, refreſhing milk, if we knew the Order of the Covenant

Uſe 2. I wi[illegible] his Obſervation, with ſaying three things about it. [illegible]xhort thee to get an Intereſt [illegible] th

the Covenant, and to plead it; marry the man and then plead the Contract. I propheſie to you all that are not effectually called, and all that are not united to Chriſt in the Covenant, all that I have ſaid, or that I am to ſay, from the Covenant, or all that ye can plead from it, ſhal never be to your advantage, there are great and precious Promiſes in the Covenant, *I will blot out your iniquities and remember them no more: I will caſt them behind my back, and caſt them in the bottom of the ſea,* none of them all are to you, if ye have not married the Man, conſider, if ye would follow the Covenant orderly, conſider ſeriouſly, what a ridiculous thing it were if a Sinner ſhould go to that Promiſe, *Though your iniquities were red like crimſon, I will make them like wool, though they were as ſcarlet, I will make them white as ſnow*; if ye ſhould not obſerve the Order of the Covenant, and not obſerve what is required before ye get that ſin pardoned, might not all Whoremongers, and Adulterers, and Murderers, and Blaſphemers, and Sabbath-breakers, come and ſay, O here is a promiſe, I will blot out your iniquities, and will remember them no more, and ſprinkle clean water upon you, if they ſhould not obſerve the Order of the Covenant, and by the way, take good heed how ye bring in a Promiſe, if ye keep not the order of the promiſe, ye have no right to the promiſe. *Antinomians* tell us, we may preach to Sinners reeking in ſin, and bid them believe, immediatly after the act of committing the ſin, and tell them, though your iniquities were as Scarlet, they ſhal be white as Snow, they obſerve not the order of the Covenant. 3. I would have you in order to this, that ye may obſerve the order of the Covenant, know, how the Covenant is ordered, what is the Order and Method in which God hath caſten the Covenant, ſince we can never get Benefit from the Covenant, except we obſerve the order of it? if we plead one promiſe, and forget as neceſſary an one, if we plead pardon, and have not repented, if we plead peace, and are not effectually called; its true, there are promiſes of peace and pardon, but they are not pleaded according to the order of the Covenant, and this leads me to the ſecond Obſervation.

Doct. *That in order to the glory of God, and the peace and ſalvation of Believers, God hath appointed an Order in the Co-*

venant, to be observed, and we must observe it. He hath appointed an Order, and an excellent Method in it, for it proceeds from the God of Order, and its Treated by the Mediator of the Covenant, the right Order of the Covenant, is one of the sweetest Encouragements that Believers have; and I will let you see, that of all the Ingredients in the Covenant affording consolation, the Order of the Covenant is one of the sweetest.

To break then in upon it, there are two Things I must premise, and shal only name to make way to the rest. 1. Take notice, that a Covenant may be said to be Ordered two ways. 1. When all the parts of it are rightly Disposed and Ordered. 2. When all the parts of it are rightly Ordered and Disposed, with a reference to the end; the first is called an Abstract Order, the second a Relative Order; in handling this Order of the Covenant, I will first consider the order of it Abstractly, and let you see, that all the Promises are rightly Orderly; Secondly, that all the Commands are rightly Ordered. 2. I will consider it with a reference to the End; There are two great Ends in the Covenant, the Exalting of Christ and the bringing the Elect to Glory; and here I will let you see, that both the Promises and Commands, are excellently Ordered, in reference to Christ's Honour, and Believers peace, and their Heaven. 2. I intend to let you see, of what importance it is, for a Christian in his way to Glory, to observe the Order of the Covenant; for its a deep contrivance of Grace, there cannot be a greater Delusion, for a person to say, I have gotten peace and pardon, and neither the Promise of peace nor pardon hath come in according to the Order of the Covenant if it hath come in not according to this Order, its but peace that Satan or thy own heart hath given thee.

SERMON

SERMON XXVI.

2 Samuel. 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

AMong other Meditations that *David* had, when he was a dying concerning the Covenant, he remembred the Order of it; had it been a Covenant that had not been everlaſting and ſure, or had he fed on it, without obſerving the Order of it, it would not have afforded peace; but among other things, he puts in this, *Ordered in all things and ſure*, the Lord hath made a Covenant with me, ordered in all things and ſure. I propoſed two Obſervations from this. Firſt, that ſuch as would have peace and ſweetneſs from the Covenant, they muſt obſerve the Order of it; take a ſingle part of the Covenant, without its Harmony and Order, it might have been a Cod to Security, but it could not afford peace. I entred upon the ſecond Obſervation, that God had appointed an excellent Order in the Covenant, I will not criticiſe on the various deſcriptions of Order, what it is: we have many Diſputs with the patrons of Ceremonies, that ſay, that we have no Order, about the Definition of Order; ſome define it to be a convenient placeing of means and midſes, that relate unto an end one after another; but I will not inſiſt in enquiring into the nature of it. I propoſed to enquire, Firſt, into the abſolute Order of the Covenant; Secondly, into the relative Order; the Order of it in reference to the two great Ends, in exalting of Chriſt and the ſaving of the Elect: in the abſolute Order, I propoſed, 1. To ſpeak of the Order of the Promiſes, and then of the Order of the Commands. 1. To the Order of the Promiſes, a Truth very neceſſary to be obſerved by all thoſe who have the Promiſes for their Charter, and that have all their Hope founded in them: many have written long Diſcourſes of the Order of the Promiſes, which now I

will not dwell on, I shall reduce all that I shall say, that is necessary for you to observe in your Practice, in reference to the Order of the Promises, to these three Heads. 1. I would have you consider, the order of the matter of the Promise. 2. The Order observed in the timeing of this Matter. 3. The Order observed in the Dispensing of the Promise; the Spirit of God hath appointed an excellent Order in the Promises, in reference to all these three, and Christians would observe this Order.

First, There is an Order observed in the matter of the Promises. 1. There are some promises absolute, and some conditional; God hath made some promises, if we were never so wicked, if never so drowned in nature, if never so carnal and sold under sin, yet the Promise take us in; there are other promises he hath made, that we must be Gracious, Believers, Mourners, before we can hope for the accomplishment of them; it could not be expected in reason, I will take away the heart of stone, providing he have it not; but he could say, I will give you a heart of flesh, if ye have it not: So there are some promises absolute, and some conditional, they but tempt God, if they go to him with a conditional promise, and want the condition; but they may go to him with an absolute promise, a Truth very necessar to be observed, we may go to him in prayer for pardon, for peace and communion, and press him with his Promises peremptorly, while in the mean time, he might overturn the Order of his Covenant, if he grant it; that he cannot do, for the Covenant is the result of his eternal Decree, and its ordered by Christ, and is infinitely for our advantage, and for thee and me, to overturn that order were great presumption, we may go to him and say, Lord, give me Repentance, give me Faith, and take away the heart of stone, for they are absolutely promised, but we cannot go to him for peace, pardon and communion, and glory, so peremptorly, except we have the condition: So the order is necessary to be observed, some are absolute, and we may absolutely plead them, and some are conditional, and may only be pleaded when we have the condition, which is necessary to be observed; when some complains, Lord, I have no peace

no joy, and comes away wanting it, no thou art a fool, thou has not gotten pardon, and how can thou have peace and joy. 2. Another thing to be observed in the matter of it, there are some things he hath promised presently, and some things are only promised for the future; there are several things promised for the present, *I will take away the heart of stone; and will be as the dew for influences of holiness*, but the perfection of holiness, is only promised for the future. So if we go to God and press him with perfect Mortification, perfect Love, perfect Holiness, that is in the Covenant, but its not promised now, but it is to be expected afterward; so if we observe the method of the Covenant, we must observe, what is to be given now, and what is to be given in Heaven; for the one, we must exercise Faith, and for the other, we must exercise Hope. So if you shall go and press him with the promise of perfect delight, perfect peace, perfect joy, if he give thee the hope of it, he answers thy prayer, for the promises of the Covenant bears, the one to be perfected now, and the other to be perfected hereafter. (3.) In the matter of the promise observe, there are some things promised absolutely, and there are some things promised, but there is a reserve in Gods heart: as for example, there is Adoption, Effectual Calling, Sanctification, if thou be a Believer, there is pardon and a Heaven; there are also temporal things promised, such as health, deliverance in trouble, now in the matter of the Promise, God is a Supream Lord, he hath reserved a latitude to himself, that he will either give health or sickness, he will either give deliverance, or not give deliverance, what signifies the Promise then? Yes, very much, for he doth not prove untrue to his promise, even to temporal things, but better than his promise, if a man should promise to his neighbour an hundred weight of Lead, if he give him an hundred weight of Gold, ye would not say, that that man had broken his promise, but was better than his promise; if he gave a sanctified improvement of the promise, the promise is not broken, but the Promise-maker is better than his promise; So we may go to him, and peremptorly say, Lord take away this ill heart, and if he take it away, we may say, Lord, give me pardon, give me peace, joy, and assurance; but we

can

cannot ſay, Lord, give me health and proſperity; the reaſon is, in the Order of the Covenant, there is a liberty of Exchange left to the Lord in temporal things, that he may give the thing, or a better thing; but he hath not left a liberty of Exchange in ſpiritual and eternal things: for to ſpeak with reverence, he would not be true to his promiſe then; if one would come and ſay, Lord, give me peace, if he anſwer not, but give him health, he would not be ſo good as his promiſe. (4.) In the order of the matter of the promiſe, take notice, there are ſome things promiſed, that God hath promiſed in the Covenant, but he hath not promiſed to give with theſe things, the diſcovery of them: he may give the thing, and he may hide it when its given; he may be true to his promiſe, and accompliſh the thing promiſed, and yet the perſon be like the man that ſought his Hat, when it was on his Head; it is one thing to give the thing promiſed, and another thing to give the diſcovery of it; there may be ſome ſaying, *fails his word evermore? hath he forgotten to be gracious?* but our eyes may be darkned, and we cannot ſee the accompliſhment of the promiſe; ſome may ſay, O! he hath not made out his promiſe to me, for I have not that peace, that joy, that aſſurance, theſe influences, that he promiſed, but thou may have theſe, and the promiſes may be accompliſhed, and thou not ſee them. So in the order of the promiſes, in reference to the matter of them, we are to take notice of all theſe four. (5) Take notice, that the promiſes in the matter of them, are ſo ordered, that like workmen about one work, one of them works to another's hand, one promiſe makes way for the accompliſhment of another, as for example, the promiſe of influences, *I will be as dew to Iſrael*, makes way to that promiſe, *and he ſhall grow as the Lilliet, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon*, Hoſ. 14. 5. Every one of the promiſes, eſpecially the firſt promiſes makes way for the ſecond; ſo if God give Repentance, the perſon may certainly argue, that he will get pardon: if he give Faith, he will certainly get communion with Jeſus; if he take away the heart of ſtone, he will ſprinkle him with clean water; if he call them, he will certainly juſtifie them; and if he juſtifie them, he will gloriſie them; for whom he calls, them he juſtifies

juſtifies, and whom he juſtifies them he alſo glorifies.

But 2. Another thing to be remarked, in reference to the order of the promiſes, and that is, the order of the timeing of them; O but he was wiſe that drew this Covenant, and had excellent skill of ordering all the Articles of it: There are four things remarkable, in the ordering of the timeing of the promiſes of the Covenant. 1. There are ſome promiſes Divines call Legal promiſes, there are other promiſes they call Evangelical promiſes; the Legal promiſes go before the Evangelick, *Joh.* 16. When the Spirit ſhall come, he convinces firſt of ſin, that is a Legal work, and then he convinces of righteouſneſs, that is an Evangelick work; this order of the Covenant of promiſes, relating to a Law-work, they go before the promiſes, relating to a Goſpel-work; in the ordinary way of his working, he kills, that he may make alive, he hath torn, that he may heal, he ſmites, that he may bind up, *Hoſ.* 6. Theſe who are obſerving the order of the Covenant, and the promiſes of it, muſt expect them in this method, that the Spirit ſhall firſt convince of ſin, and then of righteouſneſs; ſome are convinced of righteouſneſs, and they talk of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, before they be convinced of ſin, but they are overturning the order of the Covenant. 2. There is this remarkable in the order of the timeing of the promiſes, the promiſes that relate to a gracious eſtate, they go before the promiſes that relate to a gracious frame; a perſon can never come to be in a gracious frame, before he be in a gracious eſtate, no, that is impoſſible, a natural man, and one that never had a Law-work, can never come to a gracious frame; an hypocrite may have flaſhes, and things that may put on the clothes of a gracious frame, but in the order of the covenant, we muſt firſt be in a gracious eſtate, before we be in a gracious frame; all the Communion-days, and all the rods that a natural man comes under, and all the expreſſions of love to Chriſt that he hath, makes not up a ſpiritual frame, Why? he is not in a ſpiritual ſtate, and the order of the Covenant muſt be overturned, if this be. 3. The Lord hath this in the order of the timeing of the Promiſes, that there are ſome promiſes he will begin early to accompliſh to a Chriſtian, and readily will keep them under theſe promiſes

miſes the moſt part of their life; whereas it will not be
theſe promiſes that he will keep other Chriſtians under;
as for example, there are ſome promiſes of conviction, of
challenges, of diſcovering of iniquity, he may bring one
under theſe promiſes, and effectually call them, and all
their lifetime keep them under them; whereas many have
theſe promiſes accompliſhed, and lives but ſhort while
under them; the reaſons are, in the order of the Cove-
nant, God hath reſerved a liberty to himſelf, the Media-
tor hath promiſed to make out all the promiſes to the
elect, but he hath reſerved a liberty, he will keep one feed-
ing on one promiſe all their life, and will change them to
others, the reaſon is, he reſerves a liberty to himſelf, in
diſpenſing all the promiſes; ſo one may be brought in
early, and changed, and effectually called, and all their
lifetime may be kept under the drop of Conviction, where-
as others boyl he may let out with a Pin; and bring thee
eaſily to the promiſes of conſolation; why? In the order
of the Covenant, though he hath ſecured the main to
every elect, yet the order of the promiſe is, that he ſhould
have a latitude in it, as Lord, which is not looſed by the
obligation of the Covenant. 4. There is this order to be
obſerved, in reference to the timeing of them, that the pro-
miſes of the firſt graces, which are fundamental and ab-
ſolutely neceſſary, they are made out to the elect, ſometime
at the third hour, ſometime at the ſixth, and ſometime
at the ninth, & ſometime at the eleventh, it is near twely
then but he hath reſerved this liberty in the order of the
Covenant, that though thou be an Elect and ſhall have
all the fundamental priviledges, and all the priviledges
build on the foundation, yet ſome may have them at the
third hour, ſome at the ſixth, ſome at the ninth, and ſome
gets them not until the eleventh: ſo he hath ordered the
Covenant, in reference to the timeing of the promiſes ſo
excellently that yet he remains a Lord, the marriage ty
that makes him an Husband, deprives him not of being
a Lord, and of timeing all the particulars, in reference
to believers.

But Thirdly, Conſider the Covenant in the manner of
diſpenſing the Promiſes, and the order is remarkable in
this, and here ye would notice theſe things, 1. In Go
diſpenſing the Covenant, there is this order in the Prom

ſes of it, that the mercies beſtowed, are all firſt given to Chriſt, and through him they come to be ours: the Fathers Pardon, his Peace, and communion with him, we come to be bleſt *with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places through Chriſt*; the Father hath contrived the Covenant ſo, as they come to us all through Chriſt, and it is the more excellent order, that the ſmell of his purchaſe, and his interceſſion is on them: ſome move a Queſtion, What is the reaſon that Chriſt ſhould be an interceſſor, and ſhould pray for the thing that he bought, and payed for? They tell, that the Father in the contrivement of the covenant, he would firſt have his Juſtice ſatisfied, which is ſatisfied by his purchaſe: And ſecondly, he would have his grace glorified, which is by the interceſſion of a Supplicant, now when any thing comes the covenant way to a Believer, through Chriſt it comes, ſo as the price is conſidered that he gave for it, and that's a fruit of Gods Juſtice; and then the interceſſion is conſidered, ſo that there are in the Covenant mercies, but it ſmells of the fathers juſtice, and of his Mercy, and of the Sons Purchaſe and interceſſion; ye never get an Act of Communion, nor an anſwer in Prayer, but it hath the ſtamp on it, both of Chriſts Purchaſe and Interceſſion. 2. In the diſpenſing of the promiſes of the Covenant, there is this order in the manner of diſpenſing them, that God diſpenſes them to believers according to their capacity; readily he doeth with them; as with the corn, or the tender Plants, if he ſhould open the windows of Heaven, and let out Rain as a Deluge, it would drown all the corn and the tender Plants; but he makes drops fall here and there, and now and then, that the Corn and the tender Plants may ſpring up and grow; the Promiſes are ordered ſo, as they are full, but we have no Veſſels to contain the Oyl: Its remarkable, there are two great Apoſtles in the New Teſtament, *Peter* and *Paul*; *Peter* is brought up to mount *Tabor*, *Paul* is caught up to the third heaven; the Lord hath recorded theſe inſtances, to ſee how we would carry, if we had an heaven upon earth; *Peter* ſees Chriſt transfigured, and *Moſes* and *Elias* with him, and how carries he? *Maſter* (ſaith he) *let us build here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for* Moſes, *and one for* Elias; the Text ſays, *he wiſt not what he ſaid*; *Paul* he is raviſhed up to the third Heaven

en, and he knows not whether in the body or out of the body, he heard things unutterable, and what follows; *A messenger of Satan was sent, lest I should be puft up with abundance of revelations.* The order of the Covenant is so contrived, as the blessings of it they shal not come on as a full deluge, as they did upon *Peter* & *Paul*, but as the dew that descended on Mount *Hermon*. 3. In the matter of dispensing the promises of the Covenant, he hath wisely provided it, so, that the Covenant blessings shall be rather suited to our necessity, than to our appetite; there are two things that the Father considers in the blessings of the Covenant, and they are, our need, and our appetite; as a Physician that hath a Patient in a Fever, but he is roaving, he considers neither what is best for his need, nor for his appetite; had we been at the contrivement of the Covenant, we would have put in nothing but peace, pardon and prosperity; these are nothing but roavings of Children in a Fever: but he hath put in among the promises, the cross, nay, the correcting with the rods of men; why hath he put in this? Though it agree not to our appetite, yet it agrees to our necessity; sometimes a desertion, and sometimes a prosperous condition, may be wholsom for us, therefore as he hath appointed all the blessings of the covenant to come through Christ, so he hath ordered them in a way, rather suiting our necessity than our appetite; which is necessary to be observed, when we lay our hands on our loyns and we tell, there is a Covenant of such promises, and I have neither peace nor joy, thou may have the thing that suits thy need, and be refused of the thing that suits thy appetite; so, if ye consider all these, ye shall find the promises are all well-ordered, they are much better ordered than we would have carved them our, if we had been at the contriving of them; if we had been trysted with abundance of revelations, we would have been puft up; if we had been on Mount *Tabor*, we would have roaved; so, the Covenant is far better ordered, than if it had consisted of eminent raptures of love, and transcendent raviſhings of joy.

Quest. But here is a difficulty, may some say, are there not many contraries in the covenant, as for example find we not mercy and justice in it? find we not Christ killed? find we not many Law-works and Evangelick? find

we not plentiful promiſes, and dark providences? and can that be a well ordered Covenant?

Anſ. To confirm that the covenant is well ordered, I would have you notice two or three diſtinctions, that are moſt neceſſary to be obſerved by a Believer, and to be eyed in this depth of the ordering of the Covenant. 1. Diſtinguiſh betwixt the beginning of Chriſts accompliſhing a promiſe, & the end of it; ye would not think the beginning a piece of the ſame Web with the laſt, ordinarily when he begins to accompliſh a promiſe, ye would think it a threatning, there is hardly any that looks on it, but they would think it like *Abraham's* going to Mount *Moriah* with his Son *Iſaac*, with Wood and Fire to offer him up in a Sacrifice, ye would think that he were to accompliſh a threatning, but wait until the end, and ye will ſee it otherways: the Gold-ſmith before he dreſs a watch, he will take it all down, and then dreſs it: this is very neceſſary to be diſtinguiſhed, for often at the beginning of the accompliſhment of a promiſe, we are at, I am undone, and at the end, we are at, I had been undone, if I had wanted it; whatever contrariety appear in the providence in diſpenſing promiſes, yet its but the half of his work, ſtay until the end, and ye ſhall ſee the end of the Lord; he began harſhly with *Abraham*, and with *David*, and with better than *David*, with Chriſt himſelf, but it ended in this, he ſet him down at his own right hand, and bade all the Angels worſhip him. Any of you that he is accompliſhing a promiſe unto, he is killing, that he may make alive, he is tearing and wounding, that he may heal; he is ſmiting, that he may bind up; however ye may go ſometimes weeping, bearing your precious ſeed, yet it will end in rejoycing, bearing your precious ſheaves. 2 I would have you diſtinguiſh betwixt his diſpenſing of a promiſe, and your ſenſe of it, readily your ſenſe may be directly contrary to the nature of the thing; O but Senſe is an ill judge in the matters of Faith; I deny not, but Senſe will ſtrengthen and confirm Faith, but when it is ſtrengthned in oppoſition to Faith, it is a great impediment to Faith. I will not believe, except I ſee, ſaith *Thomas*, it was his ſenſe that was a great impediment to his Faith; ſo we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt the matter of the work of his diſpenſing, and our ſenſe of the work, like the vulgar

people, we will be of one judgement one day, and anothe
judgement another day; one day we will cry, *Crucif*
Crucify him, and another day cry, *Hosanna*, *Hosanna*; on
day we think, there is nothing more real, and anothe
day we think there is nothing but deluſion, and ſhall
lay weight on this? but learn to diſtinguiſh betwi
his diſpenſing of the promiſe, and your ſenſe of it. Bu
2. Ye would notice this, if ye would ſee the excelle
order, both of making and contriving of the Covenan
that its a Chriſtians duty ay to bring the providen
to the promiſe, and not the promiſe to the providence
we are not to ſay, O in this diſpenſation, he is not tr
to his promiſe, but we are to bring the providence, a
the lot we are under to the promiſe: ſo *Abraham* ſta
gered not at the promiſe, but judged him faithful th
had promiſed: there is one thing that puts the capeſto
on the order of the promiſes, and a luſtre on the Covena
that it is ſo full of ſo great, and precious, promiſe
in reference to the Church of God; its true God ha
concealed the time, and the way how he will accompli
theſe promiſes, but believe it, and go home and rejoy
in the hope of it, that all the earth ſhall be full of t
knowledge of God, Poppery, Judaiſm, and Quakeriſ
will all fall to the ground; the time will come, wh
holineſs ſhall be written on Horſes Bells, when wars a
rumours of wars ſhall ceaſe, and men ſhall beat th
ſwords into ploughſhares, and the lamb ſhall ly down w
the wolf, and not be afraid; and there ſhall be no mo
War ſeen in all the mount of God; ye may ſay, there
no ground for this; but the Mediator hath ordered t
Covenant, and hath put in it, not only the bleſſing
Peace and pardon, and Repentance, relating to the l
of thee & me, but he hath put in it the Order of the p
miſes, relating to his Kingdom, tho there be no appe
rance of it, but all things againſt it; yet that all that
againſt it, are but barking againſt a wall; for ſhall
cry, and ſhall it not be heard? ſhall he ſpeak, and h
it not be done? No, all the earth ſhall be full of
knowledge of God; therefore, you that have your he
broken, with ſomething of the deſolation of the houſe
God, ye may ſee thoſe days afar off, with *Abraham*,
rejoyce, and who can tell, but the Confuſions of *Ba*

this day, be the accomplishment of these Promises? the time is coming, and is hastening, and will be accomplished in due time, that all the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the Seas are full of Water; and when ye go to him for your pardon, go to him and protest that ye will not be satisfied, except he will fulfill all his promises to his Church.

SERMON XXVII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my House be not so with GOD; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

THe second property of the Covenant of Grace that it is rightly ordered, I entred on. God who is the God of order, hath appointed an excellent order in his Covenant; and its necessary for a Believers consolation, to take notice of it; in handling of it, I proposed to speak to three things, the order of the promises of the Covenant, the order of the Commands, the order of both the Promises and Commands, with reference to an end. I have spoken to the Order of the promises.

I come now in the second place, to speak to the Order of the Commands of the Covenant, and ye will find it of great necessity, for one who would profit by the Covenant; first, observe the order of it, there is indeed an excellent order among the duties of the Covenant; I cannot run through them all, that practick Divines have written about, I will reduce what I will say of the Order of the Commands, to four heads. (1.) The covenant hath ordered Graces and Duties, to be knit together, to make up Obedience to the Covenant; its not Grace only that fulfills our part of the Covenant, nor is it Duties only, but it is Graces and Duties knit together; we are commanded in the Covenant to pray, but to pray in the Spirit, we are commanded to mourn for Sin,

Sin, but we are commanded alſo to believe, and repent; we are commanded to ſuffer when called to it, but if we give our body to the fire and want Charity, it profiteth nothing; the commanding part of the Covenant, takes in both grace and Duties, if a man perform never ſo many duties, and want Grace, he fulfills not his part of the Covenant; obedience and duties without Grace, are like a Carcaſe without a Soul, or a ſhell without a Kernel; and in effect, they ſignifie nothing, as to our part of the Covenant; there are ſome, they think they have the truth of Grace, and are negligent in Duties: there are others, they multiply Duties, but they make no conſcience of the Grace that ſhould accompany the Duties; thou has no kind of order in the Covenant, the Lord hath knit the two together, otherways there is no ſuitable frame to the Covenant at all. 2. The Covenant in the preceptive and commanding part of it, the firſt and principal Grace called for, is Faith; Faith is the ſpecial part of the Covenant required on our part, this is his Command, that the great command in the Covenant of Grace, for it was not commanded in the Covenant of Works, *that ye believe in his Son whom he hath ſent*; God hath required many things in the Covenant of Grace, but the great thing he hath laid on and commanded, is believing.

There are three or four things, will evidence the truth of this to you. (1.) Ye ſhall find the great inquiry he makes, when he inquires about a perſons Eſtate is, after their Faith, if ye will but take a view both of his Word and of his Works, we will find the truth of this; it is evident, that a man deſires to know a thing by his inquiring after it; *Joſeph* when his Brethren came down into *Egypt* he inquired, Is the old Man of whom you ſpake alive? So *Joab* when he returned from the Battel, *David* is very inquiſitive, Is the young man *Abſalom* ſafe? *Jacob* was much on *Joſeph*'s ſpirit, and *Abſalom* was much on *David*'s; ſo in the Covenant of Grace, ordinarily ye will find, when he hath ado with any perſon, he asks, *Canſt thou believe, doſt thou believe*, when he lays on the Croſs, it is to try their Faith, 1 Pet. 1. 7. *That the tryal of your faith being much more precious than Gold that perisheth, though it be tryed with fire; might be found unto praiſe and*

honour

honour and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt; if he delay an Anſwer to prayer, it is to try Faith, as he did with the Woman, he called her a Dog, as if ſhe were not in his Commiſſion, but in the end, he ſaith, *O Woman, great is thy faith.* (2.) It will be evident, that this is the main thing in the Covenant, in the Order of it; that we ſhould believe, in regard of the great commendation given to it in the Covenant; its remarkable, *Heb.* 11. When the whole cloud of Witneſſes, that covenanted with God, are brought in beginning at *Abel*, and coming down to *Abraham* and *David*, the thing eſpecially commended in them is, *their faith*; no queſtion, they had patience and love, but that which the Scripture cryes them moſt up for is, eſpecially their Faith; this evidences, that faith is the greateſt thing in the Covenant on our part; not only is it the thing that Chriſt makes a ſpecial Inquiry after, but its the thing of all the Qualifications thou haſt, that Chriſt eſpecially commends. (3.) In regard of the honour put upon it in the work of juſtification, we are juſtified by faith alone without the works of the Law, this is a ſpecial honour put upon it; its a queſtion among Schollars, why faith only, and not love, is imployed in the work of Juſtification? they give this as the reaſon of it, faith is the meeteſt for it: if ye inquire why the Eye ſees and not the Hand? Why the Hand works, and not the Eye? The reaſon is, they are fitteſt to be Inſtruments in Seeing and working; ſo faith is fitteſt to be the Inſtrument of Juſtification, for its a receiving Grace, its called a receiving of Chriſt in the Scripture, John. 1. 12. *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name*; Now, there is no Grace ſo fit to be honoured in Juſtification, where God gives the pardon of ſin as a receiving Grace. A ſecond Reaſon, why Faith is imployed in the work of Juſtification, and not Love, becauſe Faith will not wrong Chriſts honour, *Rom.* 3. 27. We are told by the Apoſtle, *boaſting is excluded, by what Law? by the law of works? nay, but by the law of Faith.* v. 28. *Therefore we conclude that a man is juſtified by Faith, without the deeds of the law.* Faith excludes boaſting and gives all the honour to Chriſt. If Love or Patience were imployed in the work of Juſtification, they would plead to

more meritorious cauſes, but Faith is the inſtrumental cauſe; ſo, no wonder Faith be made the principal condition of the Covenant of Grace, in regard it is ſo fit to receive from Chriſt, and it will not wrong Chriſt in his honour, it will plead for merit, in regard it is only to receive what Chriſt hath beſtowed. But 4. and laſtly, Faith it furniſhes all other Graces work, every other duty is influenced by Faith; patience, repentance, prayer, and love, are influenced by Faith, for faith works by love, every other Grace is actuated by faith. ſo until we come to believe, we cannot repent, we cannot ſuffer, we cannot pray; all theſe things, like a body without a Soul, will be dead and lifeleſs things, without this Grace of Faith. Lay all theſe four together, and ye will ſee, that in the Order of the commanding part of the Covenant, Believing hath the precedency of all other Graces and Duties: ſo in the Order of the commanding part of the Covenant, whatever other Duties God hath commanded, he hath eſpecially commanded Believing, that is to be the firſt in order of our Obedience, and to have the precedency of all other Graces, which is neceſſary to be obſerved, for many think, that they can go about other duties before they believe, and that in a way ſuitable to the Covenant, but they are altogether miſtaken; for there is nothing acceptable to God without Faith.

Thirdly, in the Order of the commanding part of the Covenant, though Faith be firſt and principally required, yet its not only required; *Papiſts* calumniat us, when they ſay, we preach, and ſay, that Faith is only required, it is the only Inſtrument of Juſtification, it is by Faith only that we are juſtified; but its no faith only, that is the condition of the Covenant of Grace, therefore in the order of the Covenant, the obedience to the whole Law comes in after believing: ſuch as would obſerve the order of the Covenant, muſt be obedient to all the commands of the Covenant; its remarkable, the obedience that the Covenant of Grace requires, hath theſe Properties, 1. It muſt be new obedience, that is to ſay, obedience from a new heart, and obedience conform to the tenor of the new Covenant; the obedience is new when the principle of it is Love; it was of old fear, but it hath a new principle, when the end of it is the exalting of

of Christ, it was of old the exalting of our selves; 2. The obedience must be strict obedience, I would recommend to you the excellent Discourse, that Mr. *Allan* hath written in his *Vindiciæ Pietatis*, proving, that the holiness he says of a Christian is strict, ay, no less strict than that of the Covenant of Works, requires every Christian must be a Precisian, and must labour to strive and wrestle, and take the Kingdom by violence; to watch against the least beginnings of sin, and the least incroachments of it on Christ's Honour, or else it is no Obedience according to the Covenant. 3*ly*, It must be perpetual Obedience, *For if the righteous man fall from his righteousness, all the righteousness that he hath done shall be forgotten*; So the order of the Covenant runs, that there shall be Grace and Duties, making up our part of the Covenant, and among these Graces and Duties, Faith must have the Precedency.

Fourthly, The Order of the commanding part of the Covenant requires, first, and principally mortification, and then vivification, ye will find in the promising part of the Covenant, there are first promises, *Ezek.* 36. *I will sprinkle clean water upon them, and I will cause them to walk in my statutes*: these that set to duties, without Mortification of Lusts, observe not the order of the Covenant; those that never knew what a work of Mortification of inward Lusts meant, but performs Duties at random, they may perform Duties, but not according to the tenor of the Covenant: they cannot have peace from the Covenant, that observes not the order of it; now in the preceptive part of the Covenant, though he commands all the parts of vivification, yet he commands to begin at Mortification, to cut off the old man of Sin, *To cut off the right hand and pluck out the right eye*, that is to say, to mortifie any Lust, that will be as painful to part with, as our right eye, or our right hand, if one sew a new profession to an old heart, like new wine put into old bottles, or a piece of new cloath to an old garment, its never suitable to the Covenant; so we see the Order of the commands of the Covenant, there must be Graces and Duties joyned together, the principal Grace in the Covenant is Faith, and where a person neglects that, he fails in the principal tenor of the Covenant.

Before I come to speak of the relative Order of the

as it relates to the end, I would have you take notice that not only is there an order in the Promiſes, and commands of the Covenant, but the Promiſes and commands are excellently ſorted together, they are ſweetly joyned take notice of the union betwixt the two, and I will ſpeak to a twofold union betwixt them, 1. Take notice how ſweetly they are unite. 2. How ſtrictly they are unite.

Firſt, Take notice how ſweetly they are unite; for clearing of this, Take notice of three things. 1. The Promiſes are ſweet to the commands. I find ſome Divines caſt it up, they ſay, for every command in the Covenant, there are at leaſt two Promiſes, I confeſs there are ſome commands, we may get ten Promiſes relating to them, but take them at the loweſt, there is no command in the Covenant, but there are two Promiſes for it, ye need not go to think where will I get a Promiſe ſuitable to this Duty? ye ſee that the Promiſes and the commands are moſt ſweetly unite together, the Promiſe is a Bond on God to give ſtrength for the commands, and readily ye will get two Bonds in the Covenant, for every particular command. 2. Take notice, how ſweetly they are unite in this, that as the Promiſe influences obedience to the command, ſo the command influences, and evidences an intereſt in the Promiſe; the way how to get ſtrength to obey the command is, to go to the Promiſe, and the way to know if the Promiſe be ours, is to try our obedience to the command; ſo like two bearing a barrow, they work to one anothers hand. 3. The two joyned ſweetly together, contribute to keep the heart in an equal frame, the Promiſe holds out the Reward, and the command holds out the ſervice, if we had only a Promiſe, we would preſume, and if we had only a command, we would deſpair, and the two laid together, they ſweetly, not only influence one another for our obedience, but the two joyned together, keeps them in an equal ballance, the Promiſe keeps from deſpair, and the command from preſumption. So nothing could be ſweetlier joyned together, than the promiſe and the command of the Covenant; we would not want any of them; if we could be ſo fooliſh, as to wiſh the Covenant ordered only of promiſes, it had been no way our in-

tereſt, it had rather made againſt us than for us, had we gotten our deſire, it had been among the reſt of the roavings of our Spirit, its really our intereſt, that we ſhould be ſervants, and to know our intereſt by our obedience; ſo hath he ordered the Covenant well, that hath twiſted the two ſweetly together, in a way ſuitable to our heart, and his Fathers honour.

Secondly, Obſerve, how ſtrictly they are unite together, obſerve this in three or four things, and they are to be noticed by all, who would obſerve the Covenant. 1. Take notice, that if we have a title to the Promiſe, we are neceſſarily bound to the command; to think that we will accept the Promiſe, and lay by the command, it is to overturn the order of the Covenant, they are ſo knit together, that as a Woman in Marriage, in her accepting of the Man ſhe is bound in obedience to him, ſo when we accept of the promiſe, or take it according to the Tenor of the Covenant, we preſently in that ſame very Act of acceptance, are become bound to the command; it implyes a contradiction to ſay, we have gotten a Promiſe, when we caſt at a command, when we accept of the promiſing part, we engage to the preceptive part, the reaſon is, in the order of the Covenant they cannot be ſeparate, they are ſo ſtrongly knit together, that he that accepts of the Promiſe of the Covenant, he binds himſelf to the Commanding part of the Covenant; on the other hand, if we engage to the commanding part, we have a ſtrong Title to the Promiſing part, the promiſing part of the Covenant, the greateſt and moſt ſpecial promiſes of it, if there be conſcience made of the Commands of it, he hath a Title to all the promiſes of it, the reaſon is, the order of the Covenant, hath joyned the two together ſo ſtrictly, that if we engage with the commands, we have a right to the Promiſes. 2. This ſtrictneſs of the Union betwixt the two in the Covenant, which is excellently contrived in the order of it, appears in this, that the commanding and promiſing part of the Covenant, are in all their parts and pendicles, inſeparably joyned together; if we have a right to one Promiſe, we have a right to all, we cannot obey one command in the Covenant, and caſt at another, for that overturns the order and ſtrict connection betwixt the parties

of the Covenant: I deny not, but one Promiſe may be ſweeter than another, and we may be better at one duty than at another, we may get more liberty in one duty than another, but to accept one Promiſe and caſt at another, to accept one duty, and caſt at another, overturns the order of the Covenant, and whoever pretends to the Covenant, and thinks he hath a ſweetneſs from it, and caſts at one duty in the Covenant, and not at another, *he that offends in one duty, he offends in all*, as *James* ſays, not but we may be ſtrong in one thing, and weak in another, but a wilful paſſing by any duty in the Covenant, and ſlighting of it, is an evidence thou deſpiſeſt it. 3. The ſtrictneſs of the order of the Covenant, betwixt the Commands and the Promiſes, will appear in this; that there is no obedience to the Command can be given, without the Promiſe, and there is no evidence of a right to the promiſe without the Command, they are ſo inſeparably knit, that a man could as ſoon pluck the Sun out of the Firmament, and ſtop the courſe of the *Moon*, as to obey the Commands, without the Promiſe, not that I would have you to run away from the duty, but go to the Promiſe with it, on the other hand, they are ſo knit together, that its high preſumption for a man, to lay claim to the Promiſes, except he give obedience to the Command, however ſome may flatter themſelves, as the diſtracted man at *Athens*, who would go to the Harbor, with Paper and Ink in his hand, and call for all the Ships, and take a Liſt of all the Goods in them, and come away rejoyeing, that they are all his; there are many do ſo in the Covenant, they take the Promiſes and count them theirs, but there can be no comfortable evidence of a Title to the Promiſe, if we conſceintiouſly obey not the Command, the reaſon of it is, in the order of the Covenant, he that treated and drew the Covenant, in all the contents of it; ſo as there is no Title to the promiſing part, without the commanding part, and no obeying the commanding part without the promiſing part, ſo ye ſee the Order of the Covenant, in reference to the Promiſe of the Covenant, and the command of it, and the connexion betwixt the Promiſes and the Commands. I ſay no more of the abſolute Order of the Covenant.

Before I compleat this Diſcourſe of the Order of the Covenant

Covenant, I would consider the relative Order of it. Order is a right situating of things in order to the end. Now, both the Commands and the Promises, whether ye take them separatly, or jointly in the Covenant, are excellently ordered in reference to the ends of the Covenant. To open this unto you, I will shew you three ends for which the Covenant of Grace is made with Believers, or with the Mediator in their name, and ye will find both the Commands and the Promises excellently ordered, in reference to all the three. (1.) The Covenant of Grace was made to exalt the Father. (2.) It was made to glorifie the Son. (3.) It was made to make the Salvation of the Elect sure and easie. Now in reference to all these three ends, the Covenant is excellently ordered in all things. I will speak a little to this, in regard the special order of the Covenant, lies in the wise ordering of the End, for which its made. First, I will shew you how this Order of the Promises and Commands, tends to the honour of the Father. (1.) This Order in the Covenant contributes to exalt the Father; there are some that write on the Covenant, they offer some excellent Reasons to prove that the Father hath gotten a great deal more glory by the Covenant of Grace, than he had gotten by the Covenant of Works, even though *Adam* had stood still in his integrity: I will only let you see this in two or three particulars; 1. Consider the Glory of his Justice, the Glory of his Justice is exceedingly advanced, indeed he had a great deal of Glory of his Justice, when he sent the Deluge and destroyed the old World, and when he sent fire and brimstone, & destroyed *Sodom* & *Gomorrah*, all men might see the Glory of his Justice in this; but this was nothing to what Christ met with from the Father, *Awake, O sword, and smite the man that is thy fellow.* Any that heard of the Deluge, and of destroying of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* by fire, would say that he is a Just God, that would not suffer sin to go unpunished; but they that hear of this, that he took pleasure to bruise his own Son, and had a delight in the breaking of Him, that when he stood a Sacrifice in the room of sinners, he would not forgive him one Farthing; when he cryed upon the Cross with strong cries and tears, being in an agony, and commanded the Sword to awake, and smite the man that is my fellow,

fellow, he would not ſtay untill his Sword was wet with his hearts Blood; Is there not great glory in his Juſtice? All the Torments of the damned for all eternity, declare not his glory ſo far as the ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt. (2.) It exalts the Father, not only in his Juſtice, but in his Power, all the things that ever he did to declare his Power, the making the World out of nothing, and giving ſo excellent an Order to it, declares him an excellent God; but the Power that appears in the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and the working of Faith, which is the exceeding greatneſs of his Power, outſtrips that; when he made the World, he made it out of nothing, but here he brings it out of its contraries, he brings a heart of fleſh out of a heart of ſtone, but the raiſing of Chriſt from the dead, that had all that the Juſtice of God could do, and all that Satan could do, he roſe and declared himſelf to be the Son of God with power. (3.) If ye take notice of his Wiſdom, he is the only wiſe God: the things that we quarrel at, we find that he did it in Wiſdom, he hath given great proofs of his Wiſdom, but in nothing more, than what he hath given in the Covenant of Grace; that his Son ſhould come from his boſom, and be perſonally unite to mans nature, and in that nature to ſuffer, that man might not be condemned; if he takes his Mercy, his Love, and his Grace, and the reſt of his Attributes, whatever appeared in the Covenant of Works, are all nothing to the contrivement of the Covenant of Grace; ſo the Order of the Covenant is ſo well ſuited to the end, eſpecially to his Fathers Glory, that in all the things that were done, or would have been done, from the beginning of the World to the end, it never appeared ſo; as by the Covenant of Grace, the Father is exalted above all that ever the Angels could deviſe by this Covenant of Grace. But theſe are but one of the Ends, the glorifying of his Son, and making the Salvation of the Elect ſure and eaſie, are the two great ends of the Order of the Covenant.

SERMON

SERMON XXVIII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

THere are three special ends of the Covenant of Grace, the exalting of the Father, the glorifying of the Son, the making the Salvation of the Elect sure and easie; all these three the Covenant hath so ordered, that they tend to promove both the Promises and Commands; First the glorifying of the Father, O but he is infinitely far more glorified by the Covenant of Grace, than by all the things that ever he did; but I have spoken particularly to this.

I come to the second, the glorifying of the Son, the Covenant is so ordered, as the Son is exceedingly glorified; Now, ye would consider Christ in reference to the Covenant, three ways. 1*ly*. Consider, that all the glory of these three redounds to him alone.

First, Christ is the procurer of the Covenant, the Purchaser of it, however the Father hath infinite Grace, yet this Covenant was bought and payed for by the Mediator. 2. As he is the Purchaser, he treated the Covenant, he drew the contents and all the Articles of it, he drew them to the satisfaction of all Parties. 3*ly*. He is the Executor of it, all the Promises of it are the accomplishment of his three Offices; all the Promises of pardon, are the accomplishment of his Priestly Office; all the Promises of Holiness, are the accomplishment of his Prophetical Office; all the Promises of Ruling, are the accomplishment of his Kingly Office. Now, since he is the Purchaser of the Covenant, and the Treater of it, and the Executor of it, what a great deal of influence hath he on the Covenant?

2. The glory of all these redounds to him, there is none to rob him of them. Some suppose the standing Angels pitied lapsed mans case, when he was fallen, yet they could not help it, it was above their reach to contrive

trive the Covenant, far more to purchaſe and execute it. So the Angels could have no hand in it; and as for men, ſince the Covenant was from eternity, they could have no hand in it; nothing contributed more to exalt the Mediator, for he was both the Purchaſer and Treater of it, and payed for it, and execute it, and alone did it, without the help of Angel or man. So the Covenant of Grace, cries down all the Merit and Price, and the glory of the Treating of it, and purchaſing of it, redounds only to Chriſt.

Thirdly, This Covenant is ordered ſuitably to the third end, to make the Salvation of the Elect have three Properties: Firſt, Sure; Secondly, eaſie to be attained; and Thirdly, ſuitable. 1. It makes it ſure; the Covenant made with *Adam*, tho it had a perfect man ſtanding as a Party, yet he was a fallible man. *Adam* could fall, and actually did fall, ſo it was put in the hand of a man, whoſe eſtate was great; but it was poſſible for him to be a Bankrupt and deboiſht, and to make ſhipwrack of his ſtock; that made not the Salvation of the Elect ſure. 2. This Covenant makes the Salvation of the Elect eaſie, for the Cautioner takes a Diſcharge of all things, by way of ſatisfaction and payment, ſo that there is nothing left for us to pay. 3. This Covenant is alſo ſuitable. To have Heaven without Holineſs, is like pearls on a ſwines ſnout, it will be only the Holy, that will come to glory, *For without holineſs none ſhall ſee God.* So in effect, the Covenant is ordered in all things, in the Commands and Promiſes, and the connection of the Promiſes & Commands, with a reference to the ends for which the Covenant was made, the glorifying of the Father, the exalting of the Son, and making the Salvation of the Elect ſure and eaſie, and then ſuitable to it. I ſhall ſay no more of the ordering of the Covenant, but will now come to the Application of the Point.

Uſe Firſt, Is the Covenant thus well ordered in all things, in its Promiſes and Commands, and with a reference to all its ends? Then firſt, it ſerves for Information, and it informs us of theſe four things. 1. That one great Duty, that readily many Chriſtians may neglect, who plead the Covenant, but they take no notice of the order that the Mediator hath obſerved in the

drawing

drawing of the Covenant, this order is not taken notice of, and I would preſs your Obſervation of the Order of the Covenant, with theſe four or five conſiderations. 1. Not to obſerve the Order of the Covenant, is to reflect on the Mediator, who when he drew one Promiſe, to be accompliſhed before another, and one Duty to be done before another, underſtood what he was doing; he that would have abſolute Promiſes to be accompliſhed, before the conditional, and Promiſes of our Eſtate in Chriſt and being in him, before the Promiſes of our fellowſhip with him; he that in the Commands would have believing to be a great Duty, and firſt and principally to be performed, underſtood well what he was doing; he that obſerves not the order of the Covenant, but ſnatches at a Promiſe, and takes a ſtollen Apple off the Tree that is not his own, he reflects on the Mediator; it was the product of his infinite Wiſdom, to order the Covenant, and he that obſerves it not, reflects on the Mediator. 2*ly*. The Spirit in the communication of Promiſes, and applying them, obſerves the order of the Covenant; the Spirit will not ſpeak peace to him, who is not pardoned, the Spirit will not ſpeak peace to one that is in nature, and without Repentance; the Spirit keeps the order of the Covenant, and if thou obſerve not the order of the Covenant, but will ſnatch at a promiſe of peace, without pardon, and at promiſes of pardon without Repentance, and at a promiſe of Repentance, while thou art in a natural ſtate, thou firſt reflects on the Mediator, that contrived the Covenant, and ſecondly, on the Spirit, that underſtood the method of the Covenant. 3*ly*. Not to obſerve the method of the Covenant, is to make Chriſt the Miniſter of ſin; if one ſhould take that promiſe, *I am he that blots out iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin*, and obſerves not the order of the Covenant, that is a promiſe made to them, that have a right to the Covenant, and to them that are effectually called, & to them to whom the Spirit of Repentance is given, ye that do this, make Chriſt the Miniſter of Sin, and the covenant an occaſion of Sin. 4*ly*. Not to obſerve the order of the Covenant, is the high way to a deluſion, nothing will contribute more to delude the Spirit, & to ſet up a counterfit peace, than when we lay our head on the God of a Promiſe; if there be a ſound ſleep

gotten

gotten at all, it will be on that God; but in the mean time, hath not obſerved the order of the Covenant. What kind of peace can there be from a Promiſe that a man hath ſtollen, and that one is making uſe of that hath no right to it? It will be one of the quarrels againſt thee, that thou haſt broken the Orchard, and ſtollen the Fruit, for thou came not to it in the order of the Covenant, and this is the reaſon why many their peace is neither ſo eaſie, nor ſo laſtie, nor cannot abide a ſtorm, for they take Promiſes, but not according to the order of the Covenant. 5*ly* And laſtly, not to obſerve the order of the Covenant brings the ſoul readily under the threatning of God, and in the end, under the curſe of the Covenant; its a great aſſertion of a great Divine, ſays he, he that ſteals a Promiſe that he hath not a real Right to, hath a real Right to the Threatning: ſo, where the order of the Covenant is not obſerved, the peace that we pretend to have from aſtollen Promiſe, it turns to grief, and to a real threatning, and in the end to the curſe. Theſe Motives preſs you to obſerve the order of the Covenant; I believe there are many, that have been looking to the Promiſes, that have not obſerved this, but ye cannot plead the Promiſes, but according to the order of the Covenant.

Queſt. It may be inquired here, what ſhould a Chriſtian do, that he may have a claim to the Covenant in order to it?

Anſw. For opening this to you, and it is the great thing that I deſign, in this Branch of the order of the Covenant, I will offer you ſome few Directions, that ye may come to know a promiſe, according to the order of the Covenant. 1. I would have you to go home, and among other things, lay this before God, that ye have entirely ſubmitted to the order of the Covenant, if ye have not adverted to it before, if ye have thought it enough, if ye have gotten a promiſe in *Jeremiah*, and in *Ezekiel*, and ye preſently lay down your head on that God, and ſung the *requiem* and peace to your ſelf; go now and tell him, that ye ſubmit to the order of the Covenant, and that ye could not make it better; if ye had been at the making of it, it is better ordered, than ye could order it; *For he was Chriſt, the power and wiſdom of God*, that did it; and tell him, ye will take no promiſe

again,

again, except it come in by the order of the Covenant; make this one of the Articles of your Indenturing with him, that ye ſhall not raſhly take a promiſe, unleſs ye know the Tree to whom it belongs. 2. If ye would have peace coming in according to the Tenor of the Covenant, labour to have an intereſt in the Covenant, and then plead the promiſes of the Covenant; your intereſt in the Covenant is made up by your intereſt in Chriſt, he is the Bride-groom, and the Covenant is the Contract; your intereſt in him is known, by your effectual Calling: I have pitied ſome ignorant careleſs perſons, that tell, they have gotten a promiſe, but what is their Right to the Covenant of Promiſes? Will ever one get a promiſe that hath no intereſt in the Covenant? They may ſteal a promiſe, and take an Apple off the Apple-tree that is not theirs, and lay their head on that Cod, and ſleep upon it, but it is ſtollen, and they have curſe for ſtealing the Apple, and breaking the Orchyard. Labour then to have an intereſt in the Covenant, that ye may ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*; ye may ask the Mark of one that hath an Intereſt in the Covenant: If ye married the Man in effectual Calling, after long wooing of you by the Law, and ye have given your heart to him, and he hath given love to you, ſo that ye may ſay, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine*; But to plead the Promiſe, and have no right to the Covenant, and not to marry the man, is to ſteal a Promiſe off a Tree that ye have no right to. 3*ly*, If thou would have a Mercy coming in by the order of the Covenant, obſerve, if the Spirit that accompliſhes the Promiſes of the Covenant, hath made out the abſolute and fundamental promiſes in the Covenant, before the condition; He firſt begins with the promiſe of Repentance, and then he comes to Pardon, and then he comes to the promiſe of Peace, founded on Pardon; Thou that has a promiſe, that thou thinks hath come in by the order of the Covenant, the Spirit hath keeped the order of giving thee it, if the Spirit hath given thee it, he firſt takes away the heart of ſtone, and then he ſprinkles clean water, and then he gives the Spirit of Repentance, and then he will give thee to believe, and then give thee pardon, thou muſt come in this way, or then thou

comes

comes not in by the order of the Covenant. So if thou would have thy Mercies coming in by the order of the Covenant, Obſerve, if the fundamental promiſes, and promiſes of the firſt Graces have been accompliſhed to thee, otherways in the reſt of the promiſes, the Spirit muſt overturn the order of the Covenant, if thou thinks he hath given thee peace, but not in this order and method, thou may cry peace, and make a blaze, but it will go out in the dark of the night: So if ye would know, if ye have gotten a promiſe in the order of the Covenant, obſerve theſe Rules. 4*ly*, If thou would be at a promiſe in the order of the Covenant, take this Rule, obſerve whether thou keeps the order of the Commands of the Covenant; The order of the Commands in the Covenant, is firſt believe, and then pray; firſt believe, and then hear; firſt believe, and then rejoyce; believing is the great condition of our part of the Covenant, becauſe he ſaw believing ſo glorious to him, and to his Father, that it would not rob him of his Honour, nor wrong Chriſt of his Glory, it will not do as readily our love would do; love would plead a kind of Works, but believing pleads only to be an Inſtrument of Juſtification; ſee that thou rightly obſerve the Commands, according to the order in the Covenant, that is to ſay, when thou goes to vent thy heart to God in a corner, thou haſt firſt believed, and then thou haſt prayed; when thou goeſt to the Church to hear a word, thou has firſt acted Faith, and then thou haſt heard; if this method be not keeped, thou obſerves not the order of the Covenant. So, if ye would know if the Promiſe ye have gotten, hath come in to you according to the order of the Covenant; obſerve if ye keep the order of the Covenant in your obedience, ye firſt believe, and that makes you take up the Bible and read, and to deſire ſpiritual conference, and uſe Chriſtian fellowſhip; we muſt firſt believe, and then obey, otherways it will not be according to the order of the Covenant, we muſt ask in Faith, and what is not of Faith is ſin. 5*ly*, And *Laſtly*, If ye would try if the promiſe ye have gotten comes in by the order of the Covenant, I exhort thee to have a holy jealouſie and ſuſpiciouſneſs, that ye may have been in a miſtake about that Promiſe, take a view of the Covenant; ye may ſay that

we preach doubtings with the Papists to folk, but I exhort thee, who hath gotten a promise according to the order of the Covenant, not to doubt, your peace stands on as sure a ground, as Heaven and earth; but we do exhort you, that ye do not lightly lay hold on a promise, otherwise, into your coming by it, ye have taken an Apple off a Tree that is not yours, and hath but stollen a promise; Try if ye have submitted to the Covenant, if ye have a right to the Covenant, and if the Spirit hath made out the absolute Promises, and if your life and conversation hath looked like the order of the Covenant, if ye first believe, and then pray, and come to Church, if these be not, I exhort thee to suspect thy self, and rather to quite a promise, than to entertain a deluding peace. So ye see the necessity of looking to the order of the Covenant, and the Rules and Marks, whereby ye may try, if any promise ye have gotten, hath come in by the way of the Covenant, and if it hath not come in so, it will be vomite up again, and of all the ill smell'd things in the world, that will be one, to swallow down a promise and vomite it up again.

Use 2: The second Use of the Point, is there such an excellent order in the Covenant? then I would have thee to submit to this order in the Covenant, and I will offer you four Cases, wherein I would press you to submit to the order of the Covenant. I believe there are many, and I wonder often, that both my self and other Ministers, that we are not more in preaching so necessary a Truth, that it is not more ordinary, to tell People, that they have gotten a promise, and they observe not the order of the promise. 1. I exhort you to submit to this order of the Covenant, in your desires, when we go to God with our prayers, the thing we pray for, is never prayed for right, except we submit our desires in two things. 1. I desire you may submit your desires in trying the things ye make request for, submit to it according to the Tenor of the Covenant; do not say, give me pardon, when he hath not given Repentance; do not say, justifie me, when he hath not effectually called you; for ye bid him, in that case, overturn the order of the Covenant. 2*ly*. I would have you submit to it, in the answer of your desires, many a time we go to him, and

of

of all the fruitleſs works we go about throughout th
week, is prayer; we never know our ſelves a ſtraw-broa
better at the weeks end, than at the beginning of i
when we have been in ſecret morning and evening, an
ſometime at mid-time of the day, the reaſon is, ye g
not to him according to the order of the Covenant;
is an unreaſonable deſire to bid him overrun the thing
that his Son hath treated, and ſealed with his own Blood
and payed for it; we go to him, and deſires him no
according to the order of the Covenant, we cry, give m
peace, and give me Pardon, and it may be, he hath no
given Repentance; therefore learn from this Sermon, t
ſubmit your deſires, and the anſwers of them, to the or
dering of the Covenant; And I am confident, there ar
many that uſe to go to God, if ye would caſt up you
reckoning, what ye deſired, and the way of your deſires
what ever it was, it was ſomething inconſiſtent wit
the order of the Covenant, that the Mediator treated
In the ſecond place, I would have you to ſubmit you
practice to the order of the Covenant; ye were hearing
that believing is the firſt & principal thing, and other Du
ties muſt be influenced by Faith; Many, when they go
to pray, obſerve not this, and when they come to hear
they hear not in Faith; whatever they ask, they ask no
in Faith; they would have Prayer, Hearing, and Repen
tance, without Faith, which is not according to the order
of the Covenant; Submit thy practice to the order of the
Covenant, when thou goes to God, examine if it be ac
cording to the order of the Covenant. 3*ly*, I would have
thee ſubmitting thy Enjoyments to the order of the Co
venant; I mean, even thy greateſt Spiritual Enjoyments;
the Lord hath ordered the Covenant ſo, as he hath timeing
of the peace, and deliverance of his Church, and the com
munications of his Spirit to his people; many a time we
would limit God, in asking peace, and delivering the
Church, we bid him do this the day, or to morrow; the
Covenant is ſo ordered as he hath left the timing of
theſe to him, who is a Lord of his Liberty; thou that
will quarrel, I was at this Sermon and that Sermon, and
I ſaw him not, and I go to him in corners, and I ſcarce
find him; ye would take notice, that the ordering of
the Covenant, it ſecures the Mercy, yet it allows him
the

the timeing of it, in the ordering of the Covenant. And *Laſtly*, I would have you to ſubmit to this order in the Covenant, not only your deſires, your practices, and your Enjoyments, but alſo ſubmit to it in every thing, whatever be more comprehended under any of theſe three. O! If this were more obſerved, readily there would be more peace.

Uſe 3d. But to cloſe all, becauſe of the time, I would cloſe all with a word to three ſorts of perſons, and ſhall ſay no more. The firſt ſhall be a word of Reproof to them that obſerve not this Order, and they are the Generality among us; And the Truth is, it makes up a frothy profeſſion, theſe that perform duties without Faith, theſe that have gotten a promiſe, without a right from the Covenant, they obſerve not the order of the Commands and Promiſes; They hear, they pray, they wait on Ordinances, they confer, and have ſpiritual fellowſhip, and in the mean time, they do it without the Spirit of Faith: I tell thee, and I cloſe with this part of theſe four Sermons, that thou obſerves not the order of the Covenant, and thou ſhall never be the better of the Covenant: It was a well contrived and wiſely ordered Covenant, and ye that think to take Heaven in another order and way, and will not firſt believe, and then do, and thou wilt take a promiſe, without obſerving the order of the Covenant, thou ſhall have *the Lord meeting thee in the Valley of deciſion*, with, *what haſt thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth?* And thou ſhalt have a real curſe, for taking a promiſe that thou haſt no right to, and ſteuling an Apple off a Tree that is not thine. *2ly*, I exhort all of you, to obſerve the order of the Covenant better; it is a buſineſs of a Heaven and of a hell, if ye would feed on the conſolations of the Covenant, the bleſſed Jeſus, who was the Wiſdom of the Father, he drew it, treated it, contrived it in ſuch an order, in Commands and Promiſes, and the ſweet Harmony of Commands and Promiſes. I exhort you, among all the Sermons preached on this Text, that ye would obſerve the order of the Covenant, which readily may be more neceſſary for you, than any part of the Bible; but to Believers that have obſerved this, I have three or four things to ſay to them, and will cloſe with it. 1. Chriſtian, I exhort thee to build on the Covenant, O! it is well ordered. There are ſome Divines regrate, that

that in our Church we want Evangelick Pſalms, taken out of the New Teſtament, on the immediate praiſes, not typical praiſes, but the expreſs praiſes of Jeſus Chriſt: Though I be againſt the *Papiſts* on this head, yet it is a thing we may have drawn up, as *Simeons* Song, and *Maries* Song, to be ſung among us; yet whatever of this be, we are to be praiſing him, for the right guiding of the Covenant; the Father could wiſh no more, in the rigour of Juſtice, and we could wiſh no more in the rigour of Grace, than we have gotten; therefore build not only on the Covenant, but when ye have any occaſion, ye are to tune over a Song to God, and bleſs him for the order of the Covenant, and for the treating of the Commands of the Covenant. 2*ly*, I would have you making uſe of a main Particular in the ordering of the Covenant, and the not uſe-making of it, undoes a Believer's peace; that is to ſay, 1. The Covenant is ſo ordered, that he is to pay for all our debt. 2*ly*, He is to pay for all the infirmities of the heart. 3*ly*, When there are any failings, that he ſhall accept of the ſincerity of the will for perfection, therefore go ye, and make uſe of the order of his own contriving, he hath done the buſineſs, ſo as there is not a Groat left to thee and me to pay; the Father hath received a ranſome, and he hath payed the whole Shot, he hath ordered the Covenant ſo, as it is not laid on me in the Covenant, to take away my heart of ſtone, but it runs, *I will take away the heart of ſtone*; Now, I ſay, preſs this order of the Covenant on him, and be ſupported with it, for your friends, and for your ſelves; and when there comes to be any fail or breach made, and ye have gotten a wound for it, as a Believer may have all his bones broken, as *David* had his, *Pſal.* 51. Know, that he is bound to bind up your wounds, and preſs him with it, for he is abundantly able to pay; never preſs him with leſs than he hath undertaken in the Covenant; preſs him that he would keep you from a deluſion, and from laying a ſtollen Apple to your door, but have firſt a right to the Apple Tree. I will cloſe this, with preſſing you to improve theſe Sermons on the order of the Covenant. I know no Scripture will contribute more for your illumination, than this order of the Covenant, for it may ſhake many of your peaces, therefore go and obſerve the order of the Covenant.

SERMON

SERMON XXIX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

HAving ſpoken in ſome preceeding Sermons to the order of the Covenant, and ſhewed the neceſſity of obſerving the order of the Covenant, both in its Promiſes and Commands, and rebuked thoſe that ſteal a Promiſe, and lay it as a Cod to Security to ſleep on, while in the mean time the Promiſe comes not in accorn ding to the order of the Covenant, the abſolute Promiſe not accompliſhed, and yet claiming to the conditional Promiſe: A multitude of things of this nature have been handled.

But I come now to the third Property of this Covenant, *and ſure*, it is ordered in all things and ſure; if this property were wanting, all the reſt of the properties would be inſignificant, for it would not be everlaſting, though it were never ſo well ordered, nor it would not be comfortable, unleſs it were ſure.

The word in the Hebrew, *Montanus* renders it *Conditum*, others render it *Munitum*, it is ordered in all things and fortified; it is a word in the Hebrew, that comes from a Root that ſignifies to guard, a Metaphor borrowed from a Gariſon, when Souldiers uſe to ly in Gariſon together; it is ordered in all things, and Guarded and Garriſoned, but our Tranſlation hath it, *It is ordered in all things and ſure*; and accordingly I will take it in handling this Theme.

The word *Sure*, it imports many things in it, it is a Covenant that God will not change nor alter, nor yet that he will break; It is called 2 *Chron.* 3. 5. *A Covenant of Faith*, when *Abijah* comes out to fight with *Jereboam*, who had ſtollen *Iſrael* from the Houſe of *David*, Ought ye not to know, ſays he, that the Lord God of *Iſreel*, gave

the Kingdom over *Iſrael* to *David* for ever, even to him and to his Sons, by a *Covenant of ſalt*; now ſalt is the thing that keeps any thing from putrifaction, the thing that is ſalted uſes to be preſerved; ſo ye find it *Num.* 18. 19. ſpeaking of the Prieſts portion of the offerings, *It is a covenant of ſalt for ever before the Lord, unto thee, and to thy ſeed with thee*; ſo a Covenant of Salt, that is, it is a Covenant that will not putrifie nor corrupt. But I will take this property of the Covenant, as it lyes Tranſlated in this Text, and ſhall propoſe this obſervation from it.

Doctrine. *That among many excellent ingredients and properties of the Covenant this is one, that it is ſure, it is ordered in all things, and ſure.* The mercies of *David* are called ſure mercies. *Iſaiah* 55. 3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear, and your ſoul ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David.* But ye have a remarkable word, to confirm this property of the Covenant, that its ſure, among many others in the Bible, *Jer.* 33. 20. *Thus ſaith the Lord, if ye can break my Covenant of the day and of the night, and that there ſhould not be day and night in their ſeaſon, then may alſo my Covenant be broken with David my ſervant*, &c. Now, is there any thing ſurer than Night and Day in their ſeaſon? Since the foundation of the Earth was laid, this hath never failed, whatever reelings have been in the World, day and night in their ſeaſon have never failed; now the Covenant is no leſs ſure than night and day in their ſeaſon; a number of ſuch like Scriptures might be brought to prove that it is ſure.

Now I would inſiſt a little in proving that its ſure, and 2*ly*. then ſhall clear ſome Practical Queſtions about it, and 3*ly*. ſhall apply it.

And Firſt, that I may let you ſee that your Faith walks not upon Ice, that will crack under you, and break thorow, while you take you to the Covenant, but upon a ſure foundation; I will offer you reaſons of two ſorts to prove that its ſure, and the laying of them together will make it appear a very rational Truth.

I ſhall firſt give you ſome negative Reaſons; and Secondly, ſome poſitive Reaſons; which being laid together will evince that it is guarded, fortified and ſure.

Reaſon 1. *Negative.* For the firſt, the Negative Reaſon

that will contribute to prove it ſure, I ſhall reduce them to three Heads; or rather there are three things, that uſe to make a Covenant or Bargain unſure; and all the three are removed from this Covenant of Grace. 1, Either there muſt be ſomething makes it unſure on Gods part: Or, 2. There muſt be ſomething on our part: Or, 3. There is ſomething makes it unſure in the nature and form of a Covenant. Theſe three ordinarly in Bargains makes them unſure, and none of the three can concur, to make this Covenant unſure; examine all the three, and ye will find it one of the beſt ſecured Bargains that ever was made to any.

Firſt, There can be nothing on Gods part; there are three things on mens part, that make a Covenant or Bargain unſure, and none of them all concur in God. 1. Often men make Bargains, and they forget them; its remarkable *Pharaohs* chief Butler, when *Joſeph* had interpreted his dream, promiſed that he would remember him, but when he was advanced to his Butlerſhip again, he forgot him, *Gen.* 40. 23. But this cannot be incident to God in making this Covenant, *Pſalm* 111. 5. *He will ever be mindful of his Covenant.* And Heb. 6. 10. *For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have ſhewed towards his Name*, &c. Now, forgetfulneſs in him, would be unrighteouſneſs. 2*ly*. Severals break their Covenants, not only through forgetfulneſs, but through weakneſs and impotency, they are not able to fulfil them, and therefore they break them; now this cannot be in God, we believe, (and it is the firſt Article of our Creed, and we may believe all the reſt the better that it is there) *We believe in God the Father Almighty.* He that meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and metted out the Heaven with a ſpan, and comprehended the duſt of the Earth in a meaſure, and weighed the mountains in Scales, and the hills in a ballance, is not he able to fulfill his Covenant? There is no promiſe in all the Bible, but he is able to fulfil it. 3*ly*. Severals break their Bargains through unrighteouſneſs, they rew them again; there are ſome makes Vows to God, and they ſeek out all the evaſions in the world they can get, to ſatisfie their Conſcience, that they may be looſed from thoſe Vows; they do (as *Lycurgus* ſaid ſome do with their Oaths and

their Vows) as Children uſe to do with *French* Kyles, they are at a great deal of pains to get them ſet up, and in right order, and when they are all ſet up, they preſently roll a Bowl among them, to throw them down again: but this cannot be in God, there's no Attribute in him prejudged by his unrighteouſneſs, his mercy, his juſtice, his glory, is more advanced by this Covenant, than the Covenant of Works; ſo he cannot do with his Covenant, as we do with ours; readily they that do ſo with their Bargains and Covenants, they are like a Horſe kept within a Hedge, they are peaceable, but when they break over the Hedge, they range over the Countrey; ſo do men with their Covenants, ſo long as they are kept within the Hedge of the Covenant, they ſeek not ſo much after their Luſts; but when they have broken over the Hedge, they get liberty to follow their Luſts, ſo there can be no failing of the Covenant on Gods part.

2*ly*, It cannot be unſure on our part; it is true, here would appear the greateſt weakneſs, but it is abundantly ſecured on our part; Remember ye not what ye heard when I was ſpeaking of the Covenants being everlaſting? That a Believer cannot fall out of a Covenanted eſtate unleſs God break unto him; Now it cannot be unſure in regard there are four or five kinds of Promiſes in the Covenant, that makes it ſure on our part, *Firſt*, There are promiſes of the firſt graces, the want of an heart of fleſh, the want of clean water ſprinkled on us, cannot make the Covenant unſure on our part, becauſe all theſe are promiſed. 2*ly*. On our part, its true we have grace but it connot act, and one may think, that will make the Covenant unſure, but there are promiſes of influence in the Covenant, *Hoſ.* 14. 5. *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael he ſhall grow as the Lilie, and ſhoot forth his roots as Lebanon.* 3*ly* That might make the Covenant unſure on our part we may break and fall away, but there are promiſes of perſeverance in the Covenant; remarkable is that promiſe, *Jer.* 32. 48. *And I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* Its made an everlaſting Covenant, becauſe not only God will not turn away from them, to do them good, but he will put his fear in their heart, that they

they ſhall not depart from him. 4*ly*. It may make the Covenant ſeem unſure on our part, that we are guilty, and will not that make him break; No, guiltineſs on our part will not break the Covenant, for there are promiſes of Repentance, and promiſes of Righteouſneſs, of Faith, to cover our guiltineſs, if once we be really in Covenant with him, he muſt break to us, before we can come out of a Covenanted Eſtate with him. Muſt it not ſtand then on very ſure Terms, when there is nothing either on Gods part, or our part, that can break this Covenant, and make it unſure?

But Thirdly, The Covenant may be unſure, becauſe of the nature or form of a Covenant; and in this Covenant, none of theſe two can concur to make it unſure; And Firſt, there is nothing in the nature of it can make it unſure, in Diſputs with ſome, who have laboured to looſe the Tyes of National Covenants; there are three things hath been objected againſt them, its true all of them groundleſly objected againſt them; but that they be objections againſt this Covenant of Grace, ye will find them far from having any Foundation. 1. They tell us, a Covenant is not ſure, when it is contrair to former lawful Oaths; no queſtion a Covenant about indifferent things, contrair to former lawful Oaths, cannot be lawful; and the Inſtance they bring is, the Tye of the Covenant was contrair to lawful Oaths, and therefore cannot be binding; but this cannot be pretended to in the Covenant of Grace, in the leaſt ſhadow of it. 2*ly*. They ſay the Tye of a Covenant cannot be binding, when the matter comes to be impoſſible; the thing we promiſed when it was lawful, becomes ſinful when it is impoſſible; yet the Tye of the Covenant, binds us to the outmoſt of our Endeavours; now in the Covenant of Grace, there is nothing in it impoſſible for God, nor can we ſay, from the nature of this Covenant, that there is any thing in it impoſſible. 3*ly*. They ſay a Covenant is not binding, when the nature of it is unlawful; they ſay, if they promiſe to give a man a Sword in his hand againſt ſuch a day, and if the man Diſtract againſt that day, the nature of the caſe is unlawful, and comes to be altered; but this cannot be alledged in the nature of this Covenant, that there any circumſtance occurring, that God did not foreſee

when

when he made it, and conſequently, there can be no thing in the nature of the Covenant to make it unſure, go through all the Articles and parts of it, and there is nothing in the nature of the Covenant, eſpecially proceeding from God, whoſe Will is the firſt Rule of what is lawful or unlawful, and ye will find nothing that can make it unſure; we maintain in Schools, that there are many things commanded, he might have commanded otherways; for his Will is the firſt Rule of Truth and Error; it is his Will that makes this a Truth, and that an Error; ſo that there can be nothing unlawful in it, nothing impoſſible in it, nothing contrair to any former deed or act of his, therefore there can be nothing in all the nature of the Covenant that can make it unſure.

2*ly*. There is ſometimes ſomething in the form of the Covenant that will make it unſure, as if one drew a Contract, and drew it not well, he puts all things neceſſar into it, but he puts in ſome irritant Clauſes into it, that if a perſon fulfil not, and perform not ſuch and ſuch things, then and in that caſe, the Covenant is void and of none effect; but there is nothing in the form of this Covenant that is irritant, he was excellent at drawing the Covenat, he was Chriſt the Wiſdom of God that drew it, it is the product of the Wiſdom of God. *Though we believe not, yet he is to abide faithful*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. Likewiſe Pſal. 89. 30. *If Davids children forſake my law, and walk not in my judgments*, &c. Yet v. 34. *My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips*. There is no irritant clauſe in all the Covenant, that ever will make it unſure; ſo laying all theſe Negative Reaſons together, either on Gods part, or on our part, or in the nature or form of the Covenant, ye will find nothing in it at all, that hath the leaſt tendency to unſure it, but it remains ſure, and therefore as it is ordered in all things, ſo it is ſure.

Reaſons Poſitive, Take ſome poſitive Grounds and Reaſons to prove that the Covenant is ſure, (it ſhall be a witneſs againſt you in the day of the Lord, if ye ſeriouſly improve them not for your advantage) take ſome ſure foundations on which it ſtands and is built, and in them ye will ſee how ſure it is. *Reaſon* 1. All the promiſes of the Covenant, are the reſult of the Decrees and Purpoſes

Purpoſes of God, it is not ſo with the Commands, the Lord may command to do ſomething he hath not decreed ſhould be done, the Lord commanded *Abraham* to kill *Iſaac*, and offer him up in a burnt-offering, he decreed not that he ſhould be killed and offered up in a burnt-offering, it is not ſo with the Promiſes of the Covenant, there is no promiſe, but it is anſwerable to ſome Purpoſe and Decree of God, there is nothing he hath promiſed to do, but he hath decreed it ſo to be; ſo that the Promiſes of the Covenant, & the Decrees are of equal extent; there are none of them larger & longer than other, whatever is promiſed, is decreed; and in order to the ſalvation of the Elect whatever is purpoſed is promiſed, the Decree cannot be altered, Pſal. 2. 7. *I will declare the decree, the Lord hath ſaid to me, thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee.* His Decrees are ſurer than the decrees of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, there is nothing can alter his Decree, his counſel muſt ſtand, ſhall he ſay it, and ſhall it not be? Shall he decree and ſhall it not come to paſs? What a Reflection were it on the unchangeable God, if his Decree could be altered? So the Covenant muſt be ſure. *Reaſon* 2. This Covenant muſt be ſure, for it is founded in his Love, as well as his Decree, Jer. 31. 3. *I have loved thee with everlaſting love, therefore with loving kindneſs will I gather thee.* The Covenant is as it were gathering with loving kindneſs, there are ſome acts of Juſtice he hath ſeemed to us to change, he commanded *Jonah* to go to *Nineveh*, and proclaim it will be deſtroyed, yet he will not deſtroy it; its true, there was no change in God in that, for he threatned to deſtroy it only conditionally, in caſe they repented not, and they repented; but there is no act of his Love, that ever he ſeemed to propoſe, that ever he ſeemed to change, whatever is founded in his Love, ye will not find changes of it, except it be to the ſenſe of a Believer; and the Covenant is founded in his everlaſting Love, and conſequently, the Covenant muſt be everlaſting it ſelf, becauſe it is grounded in his Love. *Reaſon* 3. The Covenant cannot be but ſure, in regard its founded in the Blood of his Son, its purchaſed by Chriſt: ye have heard, when I was ſpeaking on that, *He hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*, when I ſpoke of the Author of the Covenant, and of the fourfold influence, that Chriſt had

had on this Covenant, among other thing I told you, he hath purchaſed it, there is no Article of it all, but it is the price of his Blood, he gave himſelf, and died for that end, that he might purchaſe the Covenant; and ſince it is in every Article of it purchaſed by him; and ſince, before ever the Father conſented to one Article, or ſubſcribed to one Article of the Covenant, he laid down his Life, and ſhed his Blood, how can the Covenant alter? Shall his Blood be as the woman of *Tekoa* ſaid of *Abſalom* to *David*, *All we are like water ſpilt upon the ground, that cannot be gathered up again!* Shall his Blood be ſo? That is impoſſible. So this Covenant ſtanding on theſe three Foundations, is it any wonder, that it be intirely and abſolutely a ſure Covenant, as well as a well ordered Covenant? But add in the 4*th* place, conſider the Seals he hath put to the Covenant, ſince it is the reſult of his Decree, and of his Sons Blood, and of his Love, theſe were enough to ratifie it; but he hath to do with unbelieving hearts, that ſcarce will credit him, therefore he hath put to many Seals to it, and I will only name you three or four Seals, he hath put to the Covenant to make it ſure. 1. He hath ſealed it with the death of his Son, the death of the Teſtator maketh the Teſtament of force, Heb. 9. 16. *Where a Teſtament is, there muſt alſo be of neceſſity, the death of the Teſtator, for a Teſtament is of force after men are dead, otherwiſe it is of no force at all, while the Teſtator liveth.* 2*ly.* He hath ſealed it with the witneſs of his Spirit, every Believer is ſealed by the Spirit, Eph. 1. 13. *In whom alſo after ye have believed, ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of promiſe*; it is an excellent confirmation of all the Promiſes of the Covenant, when he gives the Spirit. 3*ly.* He hath confirmed it by his Oath, Heb. 6. 17. *Wherein God willing, more abundantly, to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe, the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an Oath, Verſe* 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it is impoſſible; for God to ly, we might have ſtrong conſolation.* 4*ly.* He hath confirmed it by the Seals of the Sacraments, *Baptiſm and the Lords Supper*, which ſhould make you, when ye hear of the occaſion of the Sacrament of the Supper, to run to it; there are many very indifferent about it, yet in other places, they run to the occaſion in multitudes. All theſe four Seals laid together, prove this Covenant to be

ſure

ſure, *for whom he loves, he loves to the end.* Lay all theſe grounds together, and theſe four Seals ſuperadded, and ye will ſee, that there is not the leaſt ground left, to doubt of the certainty of it, for both as to the negative and poſitive Reaſons, it hath all things that can ſicker a Covenant.

To make way to ſome Queſtions about this ſureneſs of the Covenant, I will give you theſe two things ſuperadded to all the former grounds to prove it ſure. 1. The Covenant of Grace is ſurer than the Covenant of Nature, now the Covenant of Nature is very ſure, the Mountains ſtand firm, and the Sea keeps its ebbing and flowing; the Sun keeps his courſe, and the Moon keeps her courſe, and loſes not an hour, and the Stars keep their courſe; ſo that a man may prognoſticat all the Eclipſes to the end of the World; the reaſon is, the Covenant of Nature is ſo ſure, and the order given to them is ſo ſure, as there may be a ſure Prognoſtication given, of all the changes to the end of the World; yet they are not ſo ſure as the Covenant of Grace; he may alter the Covenant of Nature, and not be unfaithful, he may make the fire not burn, he may make the Sun ſtand ſtill, he may make the Iron ſwim, he may make the Hills skip like Lambs, he may divide *Jordan*, and may alter many things in the Covenant of Nature, and not be unfaithful; but if he alter one Article in the Covenant of Grace, if he glorifie not one that is Redeemed, and pardon not one that is a Penitent, he would be unfaithful, he would deny himſelf; for God may alter and overturn things in nature, but he cannot alter one clauſe of the Covenant of Grace, without a reflection on his faithfulneſs. 2*ly.* This Covenant of Grace is no leſs ſure, than the Covenant of Redemption, that was made betwixt the Father and the Mediator; for in effect, it is a Stream of that Ocean: there are many of our Divines, that continue ſtill to make the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Redemption, one Covenant; Mr. *Dickſon* hath diſtinguiſhed them, and as appers very rationally, they have diſtinct Articles, and diſtinct parties, but whether they be diſtinct Covenants, or equal, they are equal in the point of certainty, they are not ſurer than other. So that if Chriſt might break one

Article

Article of the Covenant of Grace, he might break one Article of the Covenant of Redemption.

SERMON XXX.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

IT is one ſweet Property of the Covenant of Grace, that it is ſure, I laboured to prove this in the Fore-noon, and before I apply this Doctrine, there are two practical Queſtions, I will but briefly touch.

Queſt. The firſt is this, is not the Covenant unſure in ſome things? Particularly, is it not unſure as to the date and time of the accompliſhment of the promiſes? Who can tell when he will bring in the *Jews*, or when the fulneſs of the *Gentiles* will come, or when he will give deliverance to his Church, or when he will return to a Believer, whom he hath deſerted? Do we not find the Promiſes generally *ſine die*, there is no day nor term put in the Promiſes? Who would take a Bond, and count it a ſure Bond, that had no term nor day ſet down in it? And doth not this render the Covenant unſure? Now for clearing of this Queſtion, I deſire ye may take notice of theſe three things, 1. Its true the Promiſes have not a day ſet down, they that will ſit down, and tell within ſuch and ſuch a time, ſuch and ſuch things will come to paſs, they are adding to the Covenant their own Inventions; yet we have in the Covenant ſeveral things relating to the Term and Day, that are ſufficient, and ye will find four things relating to the Term and Day. 1. Ye find the Viſion is for a ſet time, there is a determinate time with God, Pſal. 102. 13. *Thou ſhalt ariſe and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yea the ſet time is come*; So we know, and may comfort our ſelves in this, that there is a ſet time of the accompliſhment of the Promiſes with God, *Habakkuk* 2. 2. and 3. *Verſe And the Lord anſwered, and ſaid, write the viſion; and make*

it plain upon the tables, that he may run that readeth it, for the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak and ſhall not lie, though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry. 2. We have this relating to the Term, that it will be a ſhort time, its among the laſt Letters we received from the Mediator of the Covenant, Rev. 22. 12. *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work ſhall be.* He is making all the haſte he can, he will not tarry, nay he will come quickly, and that is more than he will not tarry. 3*ly*. We have this in the Covenant, that that time will be a ſeaſonable time, when he comes with the accompliſhment of the Promiſe; It will be a ſeaſonable time, 1 Pet. 5. 6. *Humble your ſelves therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.* 2 Cor. 6. 2. For he ſaith, *In a time acceptable I have heard thee*, &c: That is, a ſeaſonable time; now what would we have more? Is there any uncertainty in the Promiſes, though they be *ſine die*, or though they be given as a Bond without a Term? When he hath put in all theſe that there is a ſet time, and that it will be a ſhort time, and accompliſhed in a ſeaſonable time? But I add ſecondly, That though there be not a Dyet in the promiſes, and God delay the accompliſhment of the promiſes; yet his delaying the accompliſhment of the promiſes, and not putting in a day, are for our advantage, I will offer you three things remarkable, in Gods delaying the accompliſhment of the Promiſes. 1. Sometimes he will delay one promiſe, and yet be accompliſhing another, the promiſe that we would be at, we ſtand in need of the accompliſhment of another before it come, ſeveral times he delays the promiſe of Pardon, becauſe we have not been humbled enough, we are waiting for the promiſe of Peace, and he follows us with a challenge, or a trouble in the Conſcience, the Wars ſeem to grow now, the delaying of a promiſe of Peace may be advantageous, for the ſore muſt be ript up, before any thing can be applyed for healing; this delay is our intereſt, though we expect (when we take our ſelves to a Promiſe) that we muſt have the Peace, the Quiet, the Joy, that Believers have, you miſtake it, the Wound muſt be lanced better, before any healing can be applyed. 2*ly*. Sometimes he delays

ſays the accompliſhment of the Promiſes, and we learn ſome Duties in the time of the delay, that readily we would not have learned, if we were enjoying the Promiſes; ſeveral times the delaying of the promiſe puts us to the exerciſe of Patience, Heb. 10. 36. *For ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may inherit the promiſe*; after the will of God is done, there is need of patience; hardly is patience more try'd by Priſon, or by any Affliction, than it is by the Soul that is waiting for the accompliſhment of the promiſe; often they will be at, *why delays he his coming, fails his word evermore?* However, Faith be a delaying Grace, yet in us it is often mixed with haſte; ſo while he delays the accompliſhment of the Promiſe, he teaches patience, all the exerciſe we have for patience, it will be hereaway; therefore *James* ſays, *Let patience have its perfect work*; and that we may learn this Leſſon, he will delay the accompliſhment of the Promiſes we wait for. I add 3*ly*. This delaying the accompliſhment of the Promiſe, makes nothing againſt the ſureneſs of the Promiſe; 2 Pet. 4. 9. *The Lord is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, as ſome men count ſlackneſs, but is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance*; its remarkable, the Lord pronounced a curſe againſt the *Amorites*, and the poſterity of *Ammon*, that never lighted on them, until the birth of the Promiſe; the date of the Promiſe, and of the threatning, may tryſt together, ſo theſe delays makes nothing againſt the ſureneſs of the promiſe; the Clock will ſtrike when the hour comes, the Promiſe will riſe as punctually as the Sun riſes, and the threatning will go down as punctually as the Sun goes down, it varies not from its appointed courſe, the time that he hath ſet.

Queſt. 2. The ſecond Queſtion is, can the the Covenant be ſure, ſince he varies and changes? He will give one thing for another, ſometimes he will give a ſpiritual thing for a temporal; as for example, take the Promiſe annexed to the fifth Command, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; now one may honour their Father and their Mother, and yet go ſoon to the Grave; how is he then true to his promiſe? doth not he varie and alter, when for ſo long a day he gives Glory? *Anſw.*

Answ. For Answer to this. 1. In regard of temporal things, he will alter and change a temporal thing for a spiritual and Eternal; but this says not, that the Covenant is not sure: suppose a man promise his Neighbour an hundred weight of Lead, and when he looks for the accomplishment of his promise, he sends him a thousand weight of Gold, would ye count that man a breaker of his Promise? Or because of this, would ye count the bargain unsure? He that is better than his Promise, is no breaker of his Promise. Now that variation proves not the Covenant unsure. 2*ly*. God cannot varie nor alter, in dispensing the promises of the Covenant, as to Spiritual and Eternal things, there is nothing he can give in the place of Pardon, or in the place of Heaven, no, He does as a Father with an Heir, he may in Summer give him one sort of Cloathes, and in the Winter give him another; he may change his Dinner or his Supper, but he cannot alter his Inheritance, he cannot give any thing in the place of that: These promises we may be peremptory in pressing the accomplishment of which, must be accomplished *in specie*, or in the kind, there is some Debt payed by permutation or change, and there is some Debt payed *in specie*, these spiritual things in the Covenant cannot be payed by permutation, but they must be payed *in specie*, in spiritual things, he cannot varie. O! They are so great promises, such as the promises of his Son, the promises of Himself, and of all the things purchased by Him, that to speak with reverence, its impossible for God to make greater Promiss, so that ye see, though there be no day in the Covenant, and though there be some latitude left in the Covenant, as to temporal things, yet none of them make against the sureness and stability of the Covenant, but its a Covenant ordered in all things and sure.

Now I shall apply this *Doctrine* in three practical *uses*, and so put a close to this Property of the Covenant, that it is *sure*.

Use 1. First, Is this Covenant so sure, surer than the Covenant of Nature, founded on such sure Foundations, standing on such sure Rocks, such as the love of God, the Decree of God, the purchase of Christ, and sealed with His Oath, having all these negative and positive Reasons, being sure in the Nature and Form of it, without

without any irritant Clauſes; and ſo ſecured on our part, that he muſt break before we fall out of a Covenanted ſtate? It ſerves for Information, and that in theſe three particulars. 1. Is the Covenant ſo ſure? Then be informed of what a ſure bargain they make that can ſay, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, &c.* The nature of the Covenant will always abide, and our apetite after it will always grow; there are ſomethings that we ſet our hearts upon, ſuch as our Strength, our Comlineſs, our Riches, our Reputation and Credit, and they take the wings of the morning and are gone, when we would faineſt enjoy them, there are other things we ſet our hearts upon, that abide with us, there are ſomethings we love we come to loath again. O! How will we loath the things we ardently loved? but both remain here; the things contained in the Covenant are ſure, and our appetite after them will eternaly grow; what an excellent bargain muſt they make, who are every day feeling Death gaining ground on them? what an excellent bargain do they make, that have an intereſt in this Covenant? that word, *Pſal.* 73. at the cloſe. *It is good for me to draw near to God*, why draw near? *v.* 26. *my heart and my fleſh faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* Now what can we ſay, *for ever* to? ye cannot ſay, my Husband, my Wife, my Eſtate, my Health are for ever, *but God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* May it not be cryed in the ears of many, to whom I have been preaching this quarter of a year, *Why ſpend ye your money for that which is not bread, incline your ear and hear, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of* David? All ye that buſk a flower that will wither in your hand, will ye be invited to get an intereſt in this Covenant, and it will ſtand by you, and be ſure, when all other things will bid adieu to you; produce your Tack of Time, and of your enjoyments if ye can? But there are ſome nothing will not prevail with them, no, not tho an Angel ſhould come down from Heaven and preach to them, they will only give it a hearing, like one hearing a lovely Song, or hearing one playing on a well tuned Inſtrument of Muſick, but it would get no impreſſion on the heart, *As many as were ordained to life believed.* 2*ly*. Is it ſo ſure? Then ſee the Obligations ye have

have to the Mediator of the Covenant, that as he ordered it well in all things, in all the Articles and Clauſes of it, ſo he reſolved on ſecurities for it, that to ſpeak it truely, were more than neceſſar; Its remarkable in the Covenant, God hath given ſecurities, that were more than neceſſar to ſecure it, they were rather ſuited to our unbelief, for whom he treated the Covenant than to the neceſſity of the thing; he knew he had to do with unbelieving hearts, that would be conſtantly doubting, and ſeeking ſecurity of this and that, &I appeal to any of you, when ye have gotten all theſe Confirmations, and Seals ſpoken of, would ye not ſometimes ſeek a Sign to confirm it further, or then ye will not believe? But the Mediator in treating the Covenant, hath driven the Nail, and rooved it ſo faſt, that there is no poſſibility to draw it again; O! this Obligation we have to him, ought to make us take with the reelings of all other things the better, that he makes one Fatherleſs, another a Widow, and another Sick; when we find our lot all reeling in the World, we ought to take it well, ſince he hath treated the Covenant well and ſure. How well may ye bear with all the reelings and changes in your Lot, and variety of Diſpenſations ye are tryſted with, ye are tryſted with one caſe this year, and another the next, but all ſhould be welcomed, ſince the Covenant is ſecure. 3*ly*. Is the Covenant thus made ſure, then ſee from it, what weight may be laid on the Promiſes, and the Articles of it, ſometimes his People will be with the Promiſes, as men walking upon Ice, that will crack and fall in and drown them; ſome profane Ranters dare not hazard upon the Covenant, and the Promiſes of it, they count them all Fanaticiſm, and count them Fanaticks, that take themſelves to the Covenant, and the Promiſes of it, and even Believers are at, *What is become of his promiſes, doth his word fail for evermore*? O! but his Teſtimonies are ſure; they are ſecured, and Ratified by more than was neceſſar to ſecure the thing, there are many things added, becauſe of our unbelief, Chriſt thought we would ſcarcely truſt him, therefore he would have them Sealed with his own Blood.

Uſe 2. Secondly, for Uſe, is the Covenant ſure, it ſerves for Exhortation, and it exhorts us to theſe two things. 1. Is the Covenant thus ſure? Then Chriſtian labour to make

it ſure to thee, it is one thing to be ſure in it ſelf, and another thing to be ſure to me: Divines diſtinguiſh betwixt *certitudo rei vel entis & certitudo entis*, the certainty of the thing, and the certainty of the mind about that thing, now if it be ſure in it ſelf, make it ſure to thee; if it be not ſo, thou may go under much anxiety, and diſquietneſs of Spirit; and that thou may do this, I offer thee three Rules to walk by: I know there are many think themſelves ſure, but your web that ye have woven, is but a Spiders web, the leaſt ſweep of a Beſom, or even a Flie going upon it, will pull it all down. Then 1. Make your intereſt in Chriſt ſure, the Woman that marries the Man makes all the Articles of the Contract ſure, now the Covenant is the Contract, and ſhe that marries not the Man, cannot claim a right to the Contract; make your Intereſt in Chriſt ſure, and ye make all the Articles of the Covenant ſure; ye that know not that Chriſt is in you, and are not labouring to ſecure an Intereſt in him, by all the Characters given of him, *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature*, ye can have no claim to the Covenant, nor the Promiſes of it, no, no; they cannot claim a right to the Apple, that have not a right to the Apple-tree, they may break the Yeard and ſteal an Apple, but they have not a legal right to the Apple-tree. I have often ſince I began this Doctrine, with the Sword of the Lord, laboured to looſe the Fingers of them that claſpes to Promiſes, and takes them not in the order of the Covenant. 2*ly*. If ye would make ſure your Intereſt in the Covenant, and make it ſure to you, I would exhort you to take the Covenant, the promiſing part of it in its full latitude and freedom: remember ye not when we were ſpeaking of the order of the Covenant, we told you, that a Believer ſhould quit Chriſt of nothing of his Bond, the Father, when he dealt with him, forgave him not one farthing, he required of him fully, according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works, for he knew he could well pay it: there are promiſes of pardon, of Repentance, of Influences, of a gifted Righteouſneſs, *&c.* He is able to acquit himſelf of the whole Bond, the thing that makes it unſure to us, we take not up the promiſſory part of the Covenant in its full latitude, and puts him not to it in all the Articles of it, and clauſes of it, to make them out: what ever thy caſe be, that makes the doubt of thy Intereſt

to the Covenant, there is not a caſe thou can be in, but there is a promiſe for it; I have gotten ſomething of the Seed of God in me, but its not active, nor in exerciſe, its mingled in with much corruption, I cannot get a Righteouſneſs to cover it, whatever it be, put him to it, whether it be in the caſe of hardneſs of heart, or the want of Influences, or dulneſs in prayer, or wandring of the mind in prayer, put him to his promiſe in the full latitude and extent of it, for he is like a ſtraitned Breaſt, its an eaſe to him to have the child ſucking its fill, and the more it ſucks, the more the Breaſt is eaſed; put him to his promiſe, even to the utmoſt, and the more ye put him to it, in all the variety of caſes ye can be under, (for ye will get variety of Promiſes) the welcomer; put him to it, without Diſpenſation in Spiritual and Eternal things, and this will be the way to ſecure you in the Covenant. 3*ly*. If ye would make ſure your Intereſt in the Covenant, and make it ſure to you, then look to the commanding part of the Covenant, look it be in the order ye heard of, firſt believe, then pray, and meditate on all the commands, for what is done without believing is ſin, without Faith its impoſſible to pleaſe God: ſo if you would ſecure your Intereſt in the Covenant, and ſecure it to you, look to the commanding part of it, if we were true to theſe things, and labouring to ſecure our Intereſt in Chriſt, the Apple tree that bears all the Apples would be ours, if we were putting him to the promiſing part of the Covenant to the utmoſt, for every thing we ſtand in need of, and minding the commanding part in the order of the Covenant, mingling in believing in all our Duties, and looking upon it, as the great condition of the Covenant, indiſpenſibly required to all the Duties of it; we would not have ſo many complaints, that we are unſure about the Covenant, but careleſneſs and ſlothfulneſs, is the Nurſe of doubting, the beſt way of clearing Doubts, is diligence. But 2*ly*, Is the Covenant thus ſure, as ye have heard? I exhort you not only to make it ſure to you, but ſince God hath made it ſo ſure, labour ye to be ſure to him? its true, if we be once in Covenant, we cannot fall out of a covenanted ſtate again, the promiſes of Grace, the promiſes of Influences, of Pardon, of Repentance, and a gifted Righteouſneſs, they are all ſe-

cured to us in that Covenant, yet this opens no door to ſecurity. If we would have the Covenant indeed ſecure, as it is ſure upon Gods part, we would labour to be ſure to him; and here I offer you three things. First, Severals come under Vows and Obligations to God, ſometimes at the Sacrament of the Supper, and ſometimes under affliction, and they break over them again. And O! but its a dreadful thing to break upon the Lord, it is a notable Bridle upon the head of corruption, to bring it under a vow. *I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and how ſhall I go back?* Says *Jeptha*. If the thing be commanded of God, that thou haſt vowed, thou haſt a double tye upon thee to keep it: but if it be indifferent, the Lord prizes it highly; See an inſtance of this in the *Rechabites*, Jeremiah 35. 6. *Jonadab the ſon of Rechab our father commanded us, ſaying, ye ſhall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your ſons forever*, &c. And they keeped it; and three hundred years after this time, *Jeremiah* could not perſwade them to drink Wine, when he ſet pots full of Wine before them, they ſaid, we will drink no Wine; and the Lord commended them for it, and promiſed them, *verſ.* 19. that *Jonadab* ſhould not want a man to ſtand before him for ever: So if thou would make the Covenant ſure to thee, take heed thou break not over thy vows, leſt God give thee over to follow thy luſts. 2*ly*. I exhort thee to walk dependently upon God, like a Child that dare not truſt his own legs if he be young, upon the top of a Rock, or in a windy day, therefore he goes in his Father's hand; if thou would be ſure to God, never neglect Prayer morning and evening, and in all thy buſineſs go to him in Prayer; the man anſwered well, when he was asked, what wilt thou do with ſuch a buſineſs? I muſt go to God, ſays he, and know his mind, the perſon that can ly down without Prayer at night, and riſe without Prayer in the morning there is no Temptation but he is a prey unto it, there is no gutter but he may fall into it; Why? He is not walking in his Father's hand, but upon his own legs. 3*ly* Chriſtian, if thou would be ſure to him, be oft examining thy caſe, let us not run on like a Bankrupt, that never examines his caſe.

Uſe 3 Thirdly for Uſe, is the Covenant ſo ſure? Then improve it for conſolation; I know not how many way practicall

practically it might be improven, for the conſolation of Believers. 1. It might be improven for conſolation, in reference to all the reelings of times; I doubt if any generation have ſeen mo reelings, and that to the worſe than this generation, what a deal of toiling, toſſing and alteration there is, and hath been, but the Covenat is ſure, reel times as they will, and ſerve that reeling Maſter who will, there is no alteration in the Covenant, for it is ſure. 2*ly*. Its a great Cordial againſt all the revolutions of our caſe, ſome days we are refreſh'd and cheerful, and another day we are caſt down and diſcouraged, yet this is conſiſtent with the ſureneſs of the Covenant; rejoice in the certainty of the Covenant, under all theſe viciſſitudes & changes; alterations of Providence, as this reeling World is full of them, whiles Winter Showers, and then Summer Blinks, to's and fro's, up's and down's; are the ordinary and conſtant lot of men, ſo long as they live in time; but the Covenant is ſure, there is no alteration there, the Mediator hath driven the Nail, and rooved it ſo faſt, that he hath gotten his Father's Oath for all the Articles of it, and ſealed it with his own Blood. O! how may this make you, who can give an account of all changes, the up's and down's ye have met with, whiles a bit of Meadow, and then a hill, whiles a Burn with ſome Briers about it, and then a Brae; How ſweetly may they ſing? *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure*; Since the day he treated this Covenant, its like a Rock: nay, ſince *Abraham*'s days, nay more, ſince eternity; ye heard it was contracted from eternity in the purpoſe of God, there was not, nor will be the leaſt alteration of it to all Eternity.

But to cloſe this Diſcourſe, I will ſhut it up with theſe two words. 1. I would have you now and then taking a view of this Covenant, greater and better things cannot be deſired than are contained in this Covenant; ye have now heard many Sermons upon it, wherin all the things that I Judge neceſſary to be ſpoken to, and many mo yet to be ſpoken to, have been handled, I would have you make uſe of all the helps ye can get from the Covenant, and be often ſorting the Promiſes, as Apothecaries uſe to do with Herbs, laying them in Bundles together, that when

ye have to do with ſuch a Promiſe, ye may know where to get it, and after ye have conſidered the Covenant in all the Articles of it, add to it, theſe are all ſure. 2*ly*. The generality of Ranters, and theſe that come under Temptations from Satan, they queſtion not, but that the Covenant is great, the Promiſes are exceeding great and precious, but all the matter is, if they be ſure; this is the thing that makes ungodly men lay their Souls at the Stake for a while of luſts, they reſolve to take a time of it, and the ground of it is, the Covenant is not ſure, but be taking a view of all the particulars ye have gotten laid down before you this day, and be perſwaded there is no greater certainty, that the Sun will go down the night, and riſe the morn, and the Moon will keep her courſe, That the fire is hot; yea, there is no greater certainty ye have heard with your ears, and ſeen with your eyes, than this Covenant is, in all the Articles of it; therefore anſwer all your Temptations with this, that are tempting you to call the Covenant Phanaticiſm, and call them Phanaticks that take themſelves to it, but take this Covenant, and view it in all the Articles of it, and ye will find it ſure, and then ye ſhall be made to ſing, *The Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure.*

SERMON XXXI.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire, although He make it not to grow.

I Have ſpoken to three Branches of this *verſe*, Firſt, the nature of *Davids* ſecurity, with which he encourages himſelf at death, it is a Covenant. Secondly, the Parties indenturing in this Covenant, the *Lord* and *me*, the Lord hath made with me. Thirdly, the properties of this Covenant, whereof three very remarkable are mentioned by him, its *everlaſting, its ordered in all things and its ſure*, I will not reſume

reſume any thing that hath been ſpoken to, but I come to the fourth Branch of this Verſe, which contains the ſuperſtructure, and that which *David* builds on this Covenant ſo qualified; and there are two great things he builds on it. *Firſt*, All his hopes of Salvation. *Secondly*, Satisfaction to all his deſires, *this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire*; now mens deſires are vaſt, it is not eaſie to find that one thing that will ſatisfie all our deſire, but ſaith he, *this is all my deſire*, or that ſatisfies all my deſires, I deſire no more, ſince he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure.

But I will take the firſt of them to be the Subject of ſome few Sermons *this is all my Salvation*, the word in the Hebrew *Col-ſegni*, its rendred by *Montanus*, *cuncta ſalus mea*; theſe words are not in the Hebrew, but ſupplyed by Interpreters as being implied in it; its a pathetick expreſſion, *all my Salvation*, but theſe words are put in to make up the Senſe.

Before I can reach what I deſign, there are two Textual doubts neceſſary to be cleared. 1. What is meant by Salvation? 2. How this *Covenant* can be called all his Salvation? For the firſt, What is meant by Salvation? The word Salvation hath ſeveral Senſes in Scripture, its ſometimes put for the Doctrine of the Goſpel, ſo ye find it, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3. ſpeaking of the word of the Goſpel delivered by Chriſt, *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great Salvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him*? That is, the Doctrine of the Goſpel ordinarly its put in Scripture, as ye will find it, *Heb.* 1. laſt verſe, *Are they not all miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter to them, who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation*? that is, of Heaven.

The other difficulty is greater, How can the *Covenant* be called all his Salvation, or all his Heaven? Are there not rivers of pleaſures at his right hand, and who would be content to take the Covenant for all their Heaven? For anſwer to this, take notice that there is a figurative ſpeech, in this, the Object is taken as including the Act relating to its Object; ſome read it, *is all the conduit or channel brough which my ſalvation runs*; but the current of Interpreters take it thus, *this is all my hope of Salvation*, as in the following words, *this is all my deſire*, the Act of the Soul

Soul is taken, that is, this is ſufficient to all my deſires; ſo here, the Object is taken as including the Act, *this is all my Salvation*, that is to ſay, *this is all my hope of Salvation*. That ye may be perſwaded of this the more, take notice, 1. That Salvation is ſometimes taken in this ſenſe in Scripture, as *Luke* 19. 9. *This day is Salvation come to thy houſe*, that is, *this day is the hope or aſſurance of Salvation come to thy Houſe*, ſays Chriſt to *Zacheus*, when he called him down from the Tree. 2. Ye ſhal find one, even *David*, in perſonal Covenanting with God, who uttered theſe words, expreſſing very confidently his hope of Salvation, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *O my ſoul thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, thou art my Lord*, &c. Which generally is underſtood of perſonal Covenanting; but *ver.* 9. *For this my fleſh ſhall reſt in hope*; there ye have him building the hope of Salvation on this Covenant, his fleſh ſhal reſt in hope, on the account of his entering on a perſonal Covenant with God, this is all my hope or aſſurance of Salvation.

But there remains a third difficulty, How can this be called all his hope of Salvation? Is not Chriſt and mercy amongſt the grounds of his hope of Salvation? Shal I rob Chriſt to clothe the *Covenant* with the honour due to him? But the Covenant is as the caſe, and Chriſt as the Jewel, for all the excellency of the Covenant comes from Chriſt; this as ye ſhal hear, excludes the Covenant of works, and its one of the places ſome bring againſt Juſtification by Works; but the Covenant neither excludes Chriſt, nor mercy, no, they are like the blood that runs through all the Veins of the Covenant, ſo *this is all my ſalvation*, the meaning is, *this is all my hope of ſalvation*. If any ſhal ask, What ground have I to hope that I will come to glory? This is all my hope of Salvation, That God hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure, and this is all my Salvation, *&c.*

Having cleared the words to you, I will take two Obſervations, and ſhal be but brief on the firſt, that I may come to the ſecond. *Obſerv.* 1. That Believers have in their ſtraits, and eſpecially at their death, the hope of Salvation for their encouragement. *Obſer.* 2. That all the ground of their hope is, that God hath made with them an everlaſting Covenant, *&c.* its founded on the Covenant of Grace, and on their perſonal and proper intereſt

tereſt in it, theſe two ly natively in the words, and hearken to them, if ye would have ſome of the greateſt things of greateſt concernment, cleared unto you.

Doct. For the firſt, *That Believers have the hope of ſalvation, as an encouragement in their greateſt affliction, but eſpecially at death. David* is at his laſt words, as the beginning of the Chapter tells us this, many proofs ye have in Scripture of this, as *Gen.* 49. 18. *Jacob* is making his Teſtament, and tells his Children what will befal them, and what Legacy he leaves them, and in the midſt of it, he puts in ſomething for himſelf, *Lord*, ſaith he, *I have waited for thy ſalvation*, he takes this portion to himſelf, and encourages himſelf with it; it were needleſs to prove this, that Believers have in their ſtraits, and at death, the hope of Salvation to encourage them with, the Martyrs have waſhen their hands in the flames, and counted them Beds of Roſes, becauſe of the hope of Salvation; ſome of the Martyrs have told their Neighbours, let us walk a while in the fire, and in the the twinkling of an eye we will be at our Fathers houſe: When they were weeping over Maſter *Ridley* in his houſe, Do not weep for me, ſaith he, for I ſhal have a ſharp Dinner, but I ſhal have a good Supper.

Queſt. 1. Before I apply it, I would inquire a little in the Doctrinal part, How it is? or whence it is, that the hope of Salvation proves ſo great an encouragement in ſtraits, and at death to Believers? whence is it, that it proves ſo ſupporting.

Anſw. For opening this to you a little, ye would notice theſe four or five remarkable things, *Firſt*, The back that bears affliction is patience, now the hope of Salvation ſtrengthens patience, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 3. The Apoſtle joins theſe three together, *Your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in the ſight of God, and our Father.* I deny not but there is in affliction a two-fold patience; there is, as ſome call it, a deſperate patience, men force themſelves to be patient; for many are at, *there is no hope for me in God*, we will walk after the imagination of our own hearts; and there is a ſtupid and ignorant patience, like the patience *Nabal* had in his drunkenneſs, O ſo couragiouſly as he ſpeaks to *David's* Meſſenger, 1 *Sam.* 25. 10, *Who is David? or who is the*

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ſon of Jeſſe? There be many ſervants now a days, that break from their Maſters, ſhall I then take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh that I have killed for my ſhearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be? And *verſ.* 37. when *Abigail* his Wife had told him, after he had been drunk, what was *Davids* purpoſe, his heart grew ſtupid, or his *heart died within him*; Many have ſuch patience, that wears off when the ſtupidity wears off; but none of theſe are the patience of hope; ſo long as hope laſts, patience laſts, and its eaſie to go through affliction, and hope put betwixt the Lord and it. 2. Its an encouragement, in regard it not only helps patience, but it influences joy, *we rejoyce in tribulation, knowing that Tribulation worketh experience, and experience patience, and patience hope, and hope maketh not aſhamed.* Its obſerved by ſome Divines, that there are two Graces that have a ſpecial influence on a Believers joy, Faith and Hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. *After ye believed, ye rejoyced with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* The reaſon why theſe two Graces influence a Believers joy is, Faith aſſures what Chriſt hath done, and hope aſſures what he will do; now lay theſe two together, the aſſurance of what Chriſt hath done, and will do, is it any wonder that there be a great deal of cheerfulneſs in tribulation? Faith hath influence on our joy, and ſo upon our hope, and he that goes through the valley of the ſhadow of Death, and the heart filled with chearfulneſs and joy, is it any wonder that he be encouraged, and be not damped with affliction? 2. This hope of Salvation is a great encouragement, in regard it fills the heart with an earneſt longing after Salvation, ſuppoſe it be in the caſe of death, none longs more for Heaven, than thoſe that have aſſurance of it: Its a remarkable word ye have, *Rom.* 8. 23. *And not only they, but our ſelves alſo, which have the firſt fruits of the Spirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, for we are ſaved by hope*: Mark here, they that have received the firſt fruits of the Spirit, ſhould be longing, now we groan, why groan we? We long for glory, the foretaſtes they have gotten of glory, are appetizing, and make them long, yea groan for it. The perſons that have no rational hope of glory, are indifferent about it, when the Lord tryſts with affliction that threatens death, he

he that hath the hope of glory, knows he is near the thing that he hath been groaning for, no wonder it prove a ſpecial encouragement, in regard its an anſwer of the groaning, that they that have had the firſt fruits of the Spirit have been groaning for. 4. This hope of Salvation, cannot but be a ſpecial encouragement in affliction, and at death, becauſe this hope of Salvation influences contempt of the world; there is nothing will make the world more deſpicable in ones eyes, than the lively hope of Heaven; its remarkable what is ſpoken of *Abraham*, Heb. 11. 9. *By faith Abraham ſojourned in the land of promiſe, as in a ſtrange land*; and what moved him to ſojourn in this land? *v.* 10. *For he looked for a city that had foundations, whoſe builder and maker was God*: Could not *Abraham* be content with *Canaan*, it was a pleaſant land, a land that flowed with Milk and Honey? but the thing that made him look upon this land, as a thing not much to be praiſed, *he looked for a city that had foundations, whoſe builder and maker was God*: the hope he had of Heaven, made him think little of *Canaan*; Ordinarily an earthly man hath nothing, if ye take the world from him, to counter-ballance the the loſs of it with; but take *Canaan* from *Abraham*, it will not much trouble him, for he looked for a City, *&c.* And this is a great encouragement under any tribulation, when we can get an heart to contemn the world, for it is the Pitch that ſticks to our fingers, that makes either afflictions or death ſo grievous; but where a perſon hath gotten the hope of ſalvation, he looks on the world as *Abraham* looked on *Canaan*, he looked on it as a ſtrange Land, and looked for a City that had foundations, *&c.* 5. The hope of ſalvation proves a great encouragement, in regard of Hope, eſpecially when the Soul comes to the full aſſurance of Hope, it hath aſſurance of theſe three things. 1. It aſſures the ſalvation to be certain, for Hope grounding it ſelf on Faith hath apprehended its Object; for Faith and Hope have the ſame Object, but diverſly conſidered; Hope brings an aſſurance of the certainty of the object, ſo where the Soul comes to a lively hope of ſalvation, its ſure. 2. Hope brings aſſurance, that the object is tranſcendent, that the ſalvation looked for, will counter-ballance all the afflictions of time; *The light afflictions of this preſent world*,

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ſaith *Paul, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed*; and what a ſpecial Cordial is this in affliction, and at death? 3. Hope diſcovers the ſubſerviency of affliction to Glory, through much affliction we muſt enter into glory; It may be ſaid of every Chriſtian, as Chriſt ſaid to the two Diſciples going to *Emmaus, Ought not he to ſuffer theſe things?* Now, when one comes to be lively in the hope of ſalvation, it not only aſſures, this is a rock, a reſting place, but it aſſures, that all our afflictions will be ſwallowed up in that. Now lay all theſe together, the influence that the hope of ſalvation hath on patience, and joy and groaning after glory, and contempt of the world, and that it hath in it the aſſurance both of the glory to come, and the tranſcendency of the glory, and the ſubſerviency of affliction, to that glory; I ſay, lay them all together, and I hope ye are convinced, that the hope of Salvation is a ſpecial Cordial, though ye were under the greateſt affliction, and even at your laſt words.

Queſt. 2. The ſecond Queſtion I ſhal clear, What is this hope of ſalvation, that is ſo great a Cordial in affliction, and at death? its true, we have no expreſs definition of hope in our Catechiſm; many think its included in the deſcription of Faith, it being an act, whereby ye rely on God for the good promiſed, and not yet accompliſhed, differing only from faith in that, that the object of Faith is preſent, and the object of hope is future; but that ye may know what this hope of ſalvation is, I will deſcribe it thus, *It's a ſupernatural grace, wrought by God in the heart of a Believer, whereby he expects and waits for from God, the good of the promiſe not yet accompliſhed.* Its a ſupernatural grace, grace cannot be the hope of ſalvation in a natural heart, there cannot be a lively hope in a natural heart, nay, heathens cannot have this lively hope, they have had ſome hope of reſemblance ſince the Fall, their hope is like an old Tower, that is all fallen and ruinous, ye find ſome pieces of the wall ſtanding, which tell there was once a ſtately houſe there, but now there is nothing but a bit of an old wall; ſo the hope of the natural heart that remains ſince the fall, is but a bit of a decayed Tower, its not a houſe wherein a man can ſhelter himſelf from challenges, from rain, ſtorm, and ter-

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rors; its a ſupernatural grace, and heathens they can have no hope of ſalvation, but ſome relicts of the old Wall, that ſays, once there was a houſe there. Next, it is a ſupernatural grace wrought by God, all the Angels and Miniſters could not work this grace of hope, therefore if ye find a perſon tending to deſpair, all the Miniſters ye can bring to them, cannot bring them to this hope of ſalvation till God work it. 3. Its a ſpernatural grace wrought in the heart of a Believer, the perſon muſt be firſt a Believer, before he can have the hope of ſalvation. 4. The object of it is, ſome good not yet accomplished, for hope that is ſeen is no hope; ſo if ye would ſee what this hope of ſalvation is, that is ſo great encouragement in affliction, and at death, its a ſupernatural grace, wrought by God in the heart of a Believer.

Queſt. 3. There is only one practical Queſtion, to make way for the application that I ſhal clear, and it is this; Have all Believers this hope of ſalvation in their end, to encourage them with? *David* had it indeed, but have all Believers, and all that are in Covenant with God, have they this hope of ſalvation? The rather this difficulty is to be noticed, in regard, 1. The Lord ſometimes will bring ſome to their laſt words, very deſpondent, full of fears; there are many, their firſt aſſurance hath been, their ſetting their foot on the Shore and many have gone in to glory, and the Tear in their Eye with the fear of the pit; have they all then this hope of ſalvation, to be their encouragement at their laſt words.

Anſw. I will anſwer this in theſe three or four particulars. 1. All Believers have grounds of the hope of Salvation, they are all within the Covenant, they have the purpoſe of God, the promiſe of God, and the purchaſe of Chriſt; its true, their Evidences may be out of ſight, and ſo dark, that they cannot read them in the night, and readily the Tear may be in their Eye, and they cannot ſee to read their Evidences; yet generally, all the Elect and Believers, they have, as learned men obſerve, this hope of Salvation, either *in promiſſo*, *in decreto*, or *in ſemine*, they have a ground to hope for Salvation, and ye muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt theſe two, the actual hope, and the ground of hope, its true, the very unbelievers, and ungodly men, have a poſſibility of hope,

which is a great mercy, there is hope for a living man the Devils and apoſtat Angels, would buy this poſſibility of hope at a dear rate, but they are excluded from a poſſibility of hope; but the Elect they have a poſſibility of hope, either *in promiſſo*, *in decreto*, or *in ſemine*, they have the actual ground of hope, though readily the exerciſe of their hope be ſlow. 2. Though God deny to ſome the aſſurance of hope, yet ordinarly he gives the full aſſurance of it, then its a Queſtion among Divines, What is the reaſon that many that have gone doubting all their days, that when they have come to die, have had more peace, more joy, more clearneſs, than before, They anſwer, that God who is the Steward of our Peace, and of our joy keeps it till then, and then he lets it out. And 2. They whom God denies the full aſſurance of hope, they will be content of bare marks at death, and under affliction, they would not be content of it another time, and the marks they rejected when they were well, they are forced to take them then. And 3. He may deny it for good reaſons known to himſelf, and they are eſpecially three, why even at the latter end of ſome, he will deny them the actual exerciſe of the hope of Salvation. 1. To let them ſee that he is Lord of his own Grace, and of his own time, to diſpoſe as he thinks fit; for if there were always a hope of Salvation in the end, we would think it due; though he give it ordinarly, yet he makes exceptions, to let us ſee, that he reſerves a latitude to himſelf, and will not fix nor determine a time for the communication of his influences. 2. There are ſome that die under ſome unrepented ſins. they may have gone through their whole lives, and may have heard many Sermons, and yet may be ſecure and quiet, and hardened, though their Conſciences could tell them of ſome ſecret guilt they have committed in their life, unrepented for; no wonder he gave them a ſtorm in the mouth of the Harbour, not to take away their hope, but to let them ſee, that he is Lord of his own Grace, and of his own time. Mr. *Sibs* obſerves, that they have had many eſt terrours in their end, that had feweſt in their life, a perſon that goes under a quiet peaceable way of Religion all their lifetime, who neither in the beginning, nor progreſs of it, hath had many Terrors, will have a ſtorm

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in the end, though he ſecure their Salvation, yet he may deny the ſtrong actual exerciſe of the hope of Salvation, all their Lifetime.

4. Though the Lord deny the joy or aſſurance of the hope of Salvation, as there is joy, and aſſurance of the hope of Salvation, evidenced in Scripture, yet there is in all Believers, a ſecret innitency of hope, as there is a ſecret relying of Faith, ſo there is a ſecret innitency of Hope. I have been witneſs to ſome, that at death-bed could be brought to no hope of Salvation, and when they were bidden quite and renounce and deſpair of the hope of Salvation, no, they durſt do nothing of that kind, which evinces, there was ſome ſecret act of innitency on Chriſt, and hoping for the thing promiſed, though there was not the actual exerciſe of it. So in Anſwer to the Queſtion, ye have all theſe four, Firſt, That all men have a poſſibility of hope, that the Devils, and apoſtat Angels cannot have. Secondly, Believers have always the grounds of hope, either in the Decree, the Promiſe, or in the Seed. Thirdly, If the Lord deny them the actual exerciſe of hope, its either to chaſtiſe them for ſome unrepented guilt, or for tryal, to let them ſee that he is Lord of his own coming and going, and not to limit him to a time. Fourthly, to learn them to diſtinguiſh, betwixt a ſecret act of hope, ſo that a man cannot well call it hope himſelf; yet it hath hope imported in it, and a real act of hope, that is ſtrong, lively and in exerciſe; ſo that generally the point holds, that Believers in their latter end have the hope of Salvation, and this hope is a ſpecial cordial to patience, and longing for Glory, and to all that I have formerly ſpoken of.

SERMON XXXII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my Houſe be not ſo with GOD; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure: for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

David the Son of *Jeſſe* in his laſt words, like the Nightingale, ſang ſweetlieſt towards his end; he hath

hath ſung of the Covenant, and hope of Salvation he he had from it, he had fallen in Adultery and Murther, and many grievous ſins, yet he caſts not away the hope of Salvation, but he dies with it among his laſt words, becauſe God had made with him an everlaſting Covenant, &c. I opened the meaning of theſe words, *all my ſalvation*, I followed the Doctrinal part of the firſt Doctrine, I will come now to the Application, and be brief in it.

But do Believers in their ſtraits, and at death, ordinarily rejoyce in the hope of Salvation? there is a threefold uſe I will ſpeak a little unto.

Uſe, The firſt Uſe is of Exhortation, be exhorted to get this hope of Salvation, its excellent in your Life, but chiefly comfortable at death, all things then will be bidding you adieu: its recorded by *Quintus Curtius* in the Life of *Alexander*, that when he was going to *Aſia*, he diſtributed his Kingdom among his Favourites, and when one asked him, what he would leave to himſelf? he anſwered Hope; man muſt in a little diſtribute his Eſtate and Moveables, and what will he leave to himſelf, except he have this hope of Salvation. I exhort you to get this hope, ye that want it.

But ye will ask, how ye ſhall come at it? For helping you to it, I would offer you ſome Conſiderations, and ſome Practices for helping you to it.

Firſt, Take notice of ſome Conſiderations, and I ſhall name theſe three, Firſt, It may help you to this, that ye are under a poſſibility of this hope, hope is poſſible for you, it were a folly to preach among the Devils, or the damned in Hell to hope, for they are excluded from all poſſibility of hope, if they had ten thouſand worlds, and every one of them better than this World, they would give it all for hope, if it were but poſſible for them to get it; but there is a poſſibility for you, in a little ye will be beyond the poſſibility of it, if ye do it not now. 2. Conſider what a dreadful thing it is, to be without the hope of Salvation; the Apoſtle *Epheſ.* 2. 12. knits theſe two together, *having no hope, and without God in the world*; if ye be without hope, ye are without God, and what have ye in your hand, if ye be without God; its but a poor thing ye have in your own hand, ye have

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your little Cottage and your Diet, and your Clothing, is that your all? if ye be without the hope of Salvation, ye have your all in your hand; what a dreadful thing is that, and what a poor man is he, that hath no more but what he hath in his own hand. 3. I exhort you to conſider to preſs you to get this hope of Salvation, that ye are tryſted with a toſſing time, a time of trial, if we were without hope, ſays *Paul*, we were of all men moſt miſerable; what will be your cordial in all the trials and Afflictions ye may meet with, if ye want the hope of Salvation? I might add many moe to preſs you, to get this hope of Salvation, but if ye ponder theſe that I have given you, they may be of great weight.

I would offer you four Practices, that I would ſecond theſe Conſiderations with, to preſs you to get this hope of Salvation. 1. I exhort you to take heed of a counterfeit hope, *The hope of the hypocrite*, ſays *Job*, *ſhall be like the giving up the Ghoſt*. They gloſs it well, that ſay, *The hope of the hypocrite ſhall go away, as the giving up of the Ghoſt*. True Faith and true Hope, had never greater enemies than the counterfeit of them; *Jeroboam* was a great Politician, when he reſolved to keep *Iſrael* from the worſhip of the true God at Jeruſalem, he will not keep them from all worſhip, but will ſet up in the place of one God, two Calves, one at *Dan*, and the other at *Bethel*; ſome gloſs it, He will give them daily work, if he ſet up a counterfeit Hope; better have one true God, than two calves, and there is nothing will hinder them more from the worſhip of the true God, than theſe two calves, therefore take heed of counterfeit Hope, for Whoremongers and Adulterers, will enter into the Kingdom of God before proud *Phariſees*, and they that have counterfeit hope. 2. If ye would win at this hope of Salvation, I exhort in the ſecond place, to be more diligent, Heb. 6. 11, *And we deſire, that every one of you, do ſhew the ſame diligence*, wherefore diligence? *to the full aſſurance of hope unto the end*; be not ſlothful or negligent, a perſon that would come to his Hope, would not only be ſerious, but diligent in his ſeriouſneſs; we muſt be both diligent and ſerious, or elſe we cannot have a well grounded hope of ſalvation. Therefore if ye would be at this Salvation that comforted *David* at his laſt words, take heed of

a counterfeit Hope, and be diligent and ſerious in it. 3. If thou would attain this hope of Salvation, thou who art without it, I exhort thee to be a ſerious ſtudent of the *Covenant*, the great ground of hope is from the Covenant, all that we may expect from Chriſt, or Mercy, is holden out in the Covenant; therefore a Chriſtian that would grow in this hope of Salvation, or would have it real, ſhould (like a Child) be lying at the Breaſts of the Covenant, and ſucking out of theſe Breaſts: Obſerve the Conditions of the Covenant, if thou underſtand not the Covenant, and ſuck not out of the Breaſts of the Covenant, thy hope is but a patched up hope, and like the hope of the Hypocrite, that hath only a Portraicture in the *Soul*, and not a living hope; ſtudy theſe things, if ye would be at a well grounded hope of Heaven. I know there are many would be at a well grounded Hope of Heaven, they ſee they muſt die, and that their days will not ay laſt, and that it will not be the thought of Creatures, that will determine, whether they be good or evil; if ye would have a hope, that will ſtand through in that day, obſerve theſe things, conſider there is a poſſibility of getting it, it may be it cloſe before this Winter be done, and conſider if ye have no hope, and be without God, ye have no Cordial in Affliction, and at Death, in a little ye muſt divide all that ye have, and leave it behind you, and not take a frothy thing to the grave with you, and except ye retain a hope of Salvation, ye take not ſo much as a ſheet to the grave with you, take heed of the counterfeit hope, and be ſerious and diligent, and ſuck your hope out of the Covenant.

Uſe 2. Another uſe of this Doctrine, is the hope of ſalvation ſo great a Cordial in Affliction, and at death? I would from this encourage you that hath this hope, of all the places of Scripture ye may take up that morning and evening, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. and 4. and ſing, *Bleſſed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away*, &c. Suppoſe ye count on never ſo many Croſſes, if ye have hope of ſalvation, he hath made up in one Jewel, all that he hath caſt down in all his Diſpenſations to them; ye

that have this hope, I exhort you to two things, *First*, To live anſwerable to this hope; *Secondly*, I exhort you to ſtrengthen it; *First*, Ye that have this hope, live anſwerable, many a time our hope and our way is knit together.

Queſt. 1. I will proſecute this Exhortation, in anſwering this Queſtion, how a Chriſtian that is hoping for Heaven, lives anſwerable to his hope? for it is unſuitable for us, to profeſs the hope of Glory, and live as we do, we ſpeak of our Country but ſeldom, and we ſpeak not as Travellers going home to their Country.

Anſwer, I will anſwer this in theſe few particulars, 1. A Chriſtian lives up in ſome meaſure to his hope of Salvation, when he is careful to do nothing that will contradict his hope; if we be without Faith, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, and ſo without hope of Salvation; there is no prayer we put up, but we ſhould examine, is there Faith in it? We preach nothing, we hear nothing, we read nothing, but we ſhould examine, is there a myſtery of Faith in it? We ſhould do nothing but what may conſiſt with our hope? *Nehemiah* reaſoned well, when he was bid flee into the Temple to ſave his Life, *Shall ſuch a man as I flee*, ſays he? If a man wrong you, and ye find thoughts of revenge againſt him, and will not forgive him, ye contradict your hope; have ye the hope of the forgiveance of a debt of a thouſand Talents, and wilt thou ſtand with thy fellow ſervant for the debt of an hundred Talents? If ye have the hope to walk with him in white, and to have all the guilt of your heart, and your way waſhen in the blood of the Lamb, and will ye ſtand at a Triffle, that expects the removal of a Mountain. 2. Poſitively, one comes up to the hope of Salvation, in the practice of theſe four things. 1. We walk like our hope, when we keep company in the world like our hope, we profeſs we are ſtrangers in this world, and hopes in a little to be at home, in leſs than threeſcore and ten years, and yet we keep not company like our hope; It is a remarkable word of *Abraham*'s, Heb. 11. 9. *By faith he ſojourned in the land of promiſe, as in a ſtrange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Iſaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the ſame promiſe*; *Abraham* kept within doors, and whom had he to converſe with? He had *Iſaac* and *Jacob* heirs of the

ſame Promiſe, Travellers in a far Country, upon the account they are Country-men, and minds to be at home, they travel, they converſe, and traffick together, and can thou have hope to be in Heaven, and not walk ſuitable to thy hope here? If a perſon given to error or profanity, be the perſon with whom thy converſe is moſt, and yet hopes to be in the Land, where there is neither error nor profanity, thy walk contradicts thy hope. 2. As thou would walk like thy hope in thy company, ſo I would exhort thee, to walk like thy hope in the ſtrain and height of thy way; why art thou not more ſpiritual in thy converſe in the world? O! how ſtrange is it for me to profeſs, I take communion with God, for my chief Happineſs, and hopes for an Eternity of it, and yet can be content with ſo little of him here; if thou hope to have an eternal Communion with him, can thou be content to hear a Sermon, without communion with him? Can thou go to a corner and be content, without communion with him? When thou walks contrair to this, thou walks not ſuitable to thy hope: If thou have the hope of Salvation, thy ſecret converſe with God, and when thou comes to have publick Ordinances, they will all keep up a ſuitableneſs to thy hope, otherways thy hope is falſe. 3. If thou would walk like thy hope, manifeſt it in thy contempt of the World, the hope of Glory, ought to fill thy heart with contempt of the world: I ſuppoſe any ſaw a man that had a great Eſtate, and had many Farms coming in, and a great many fields of Corn, if ye ſaw him gathering heads of Corn after the Reapers, among the Beggars, would you not undervalue his Spirit, and think he walked very unſuitable to what God had given him? The Truth is, when Believers are vexed and intangled with the world, conſtantly having their Joy and their Sorrow Ebbing and Flowing, as the world ebbs and flows with them, they walk not like their hope of Heaven: I like the Obſervation of a great Man, he ſays, in all the Bible it is never found, that a truely godly Man was covetous; and is it not a ſtrange thing, that now it ſhould be the notted ſin of Profeſſors? They were guilty of many groſs ſins, but they were never guilty of that, and they that have the hope of Salvation, expecting to wear a Crown, and to ſee him

him as he is, and to carry palms in their hands, and does not manifeſt their contempt of the world, they are like a man having a great Eſtate, and yet found among the Beggars, gathering after the Reapers. 4. If ye would walk ſuitable to your hope, then ye would manifeſt it in affliction and death, thus *David* did here, the laſt words of the Son of *Jeſſe*; I have read it in the *Turks Hiſtory*, they ſay a Chriſtian cannot be ſerious in believing that there is ſuch joys after death, as the Chriſtians profeſs; The reaſon is, ſay they, they are ſo unwilling to die; great fears of death evidence ſmall hopes of Heaven. 5. If ye would walk ſuitable to your hope, it would be manifeſted in your care to get theſe hopes; why do we preſs you to embrace the Covenant, and hearken unto the offers of Salvation, but that ye may come to have that hope of Salvation ye look for.

I exhort you in the 2*d* place, to labour to ſtrengthen your hope; *Wherefore the rather brethren, we exhort you, to give all diligence, to the full aſſurance of hope*; reſt not upon a general hope, unleſs ye get the full aſſurance of it; I will not ſay, the want of aſſurance of Heaven is a ſin, but the want of Diligence to get aſſurance is a ſin; God may delay aſſurance of Heaven for Tryal, or for Chaſtiſement.

Queſt. Ye may ask, how ſhall we come by the ſtrengthning of our hope?

Anſw. I will offer you three Rules to ſtrengthen your hope, and I beſeech you to ponder them. 1. Chriſtian, if thou would have ſtrong hope of Heaven, labour to get a ſtrong love to Chriſt, the thing that ſhakes our hope to Heaven is fear, and perfect love caſts out fear. 2. I exhort thee, to be frequent in exerciſing thy hope of Heaven, ordinarily any thing gathers a habit by oft acting it, ought it not to be fear that ſhould be putting a perſon to abſtain from ſin, or to be comforted againſt the difficulties of the time? If a Chriſtian meet with temptations to ſin, if he be under fear of hell for it, I will go to hell if I do this, it is not the way to ſtrengthen hope; but when we are encouraged under difficulties, from the hope of Glory, that in a little, we will be above difficulties, it is the ready way to ſtrengthen hope. 3. If ye would have your hope of Heaven ſtrengthened and made ſure, obſerve your Ex-

periences ye have of God, *Rom.* 5. 4. *Patience worketh experience, and experience hope, and hope makes not ashamed*: It is true, the great ground of our hope, ye will find it in the Covenant, therefore observe well your Experiences ye have of God, and of his Word; I would give to Christians three Rules, in their observing Experiences of God. 1. Know, that one may have experience of God, and not know that they have it, in the time they have it, there may be a real experience of God, a gracious experience, and yet in the time a person hath it, they may not know they have it; let but any take the discourse betwixt Christ and the two Disciples going to *Emmaus*, all the time that Christ is with them, they know him not, and they speak out much unbelief, *We thought this should have been he, which should have redeemed Israel*, and on the matter, they said, they are beguiled; and yet after he is away, they said, *Did not our heart burn within us*? They observed not the burning of the heart in the time, but after he is away, their heart burns: Many have sweet Experiences of Christ, that think not much of them in the time, but after they are away, they would give their hearts blood to have them again: There may be a very real Experience of God given, and yet in the mean time, not take it for a gracious Experience. 2. I would have the Christian know, to keep up their hope by Experiences of God, that Experiences will sometimes be altogether out of sight; so that thou can neither see them in the time, nor after they are gone. I like the advice I have sometimes given a Christian in that case, in keeping up his hope of Heaven, is not to cast away hope when all Experiences are out of sight, but there are two things to keep up hope, when Experiences are out of sight. 1. Take up shelter under the absolute promises, ay when we are dung from our Evidences and Marks, we should not sit down and despair, but go to the absolute promises, such as *I will take away the heart of stone, I will sprinkle clean water upon them*, &c. And there may be hope there. 2. When Experiences are away, it is a Christians duty to seek a new Extract of them again, like a man that hath payed some debt, and he hath gotten a discharge of it, but he hath lost it, and he is charged for the sum again, and he goes to the Register, and takes out a new Extract, so thou art not to cast away all hope, but to go to him

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for a new Experience, and readily that will be an Extract of the true Diſcharge, and be as valid in Law, as the Diſcharge thou haſt loſt. Record your Experiences of God, and when ye want them, ye are not to caſt away your hope of Salvation.

Uſe 3*d*. The third Uſe, Is the hope of Salvation ſo ſweet, and ſo neceſſary, it ſerves for Trial; try of what Mettal ye are made of. I believe there are none ſitting here, but they are all filled with the hope of Salvation, your hope will make many of you aſhamed, and your hell may be hotter, than ye had not hoped for Heaven. I will only leave this diſcourſe of the hoping of Salvation, with giving theſe three Marks, whereby ye may try, if your hope be a Helmet, as the Apoſtle calls it (*Epheſ.* 6. 17.) of Salvation, of the right Mettal, or only a Counter. 1. The hope of Salvation that is right, we are begotten to it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Bleſt be the Lord, who hath begotten us again to a lively hope, to an inheritance*, &c. It is not a hope of our making, to which in effectual Calling we are begotten; if thou cannot prove thy Effectual Calling, and thy Regeneration, and that thou art born again, and in effectual Calling begotten, all thy progreſs, all thy diligence, and all thy parts will not prove it a lively hope; therefore examine your Effectual Calling, if ye were begotten again by the Goſpel, otherways your hope ſhall periſh with you. 2. The hope of Salvation, which is of the right ſtamp carries along with it Mortification, *Acts* 13. 9. *Purifying your hearts by faith*: We have hearts within us, like ſtables, that would be often mucked; there is a Dung-hill within, that pride, and that paſſion of thine, if ye have the lively hope of the Inheritance, ye will be cleanſing, ye will be ſweeping the houſe every day; what are ye carrying every day out of the heart? there are many that have great hope of Salvation, and if they were dying, they would tell many ſtories that they had of Marks of Salvation, but if ye be not purifying your ſelf, and obſerving what of corruption ye are carrying out, and what degrees of corruption ye have gotten the victory over, and if there be not this, your hope is not right: A third Mark ye have, *Col.* 3. 27. *Chriſt in you the hope of glory*; What account can ye give of Chriſt dwelling in you? Where he dwells, he

dwells

dwells as a King, as a Refiner, as a Counseller, as a Comforter, as a Leader, as a Guide; He is holden out in all these respects in the Covenent, its no, if ye have Parts, if ye have Gifts in you, but what account can ye give of his dwelling in you, uses he to sup with you, and ye with him? walks he in you? he hath promised, *I will walk in them, and dwell in them, and be their God*; when ye meet with Temptations, ye will talk of the hope of Glory, but is Christ dwelling in you, the hope of Glory? Lastly, This hope of Salvation, it both flows from diligence, and is accompanied with diligence, *Heb.* 6. 11. and 12. *And we desire, that every one of you shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope to the end, that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises*; thou hast a great hope, and a slothful conversation; I have often wondered to see, how careless a way, and so great hope, do we talk of so great a hope, and think we have no more ado, but gather heads among the Stuff, and live as the Begger? Now, put your selves to the Tryal in all these four, and if it want these four, it will be a hope that will be like the giving up of the Ghost, and will leave you in the day of your distress.

SERMON XXXIII.

2 Samuel. 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

After *David* hath spoken of the nature of the Security, that it was by way of Covenant, and after he hath spoken of the Properties, he mentions the Encouragements, and Superstructures, he builds on the Covenant, they are two, *This is all my salvation, and all my desire.* The first of them I have spoken unto, and shewed you, how the Covenant was all the hope of Salvation that a Believer had: God's Mercy, and Christ's Righ-

Righteouſneſs, abſtract them from the Covenant, it might as well be pleaded by Devils as Men. The thing that makes us have the hope of Salvation from them, and not the apoſtat Angels, is the Covenant.

But I come now to the ſecond Superſtructure and Encouragement, he hath from this well ordered Covenant, *it's all my deſire*, its not eaſie to ſatisfie all deſires, our deſires run very wide, but this is all my deſire: Two things are neceſſary for clearing this to you, 1. How the Covenant can be called our deſire? ſome gloſs it thus, the act is put, ſay they, for the object, the deſire is an act of the will, and ſometimes a diſtinct affection from the will, the *velle*, or that which is the proper act of the Will, is a deſire, and how can the Covenant be called, *This is all my deſire*? Therefore ſome gloſs it thus, *all the object of my deſire*, the deſire is put for the thing deſired; or as others will have it, *This is ſatisfaction to all my deſires*, or, *the thing that ſatisfies all my deſires*, and all my deſire is, that God hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, *&c.* But there is a great difficulty behind, How can the Covenant be called ſatisfaction to all our deſires? have we not many irregular deſires, and can it be called ſatisfaction to all our deſires? Therefore the meaning muſt be, all my lawful or regular deſires, the Covenant ſatisfies all that I can lawfully deſire. Now deſires may become irregular and unlawful two ways. 1. When we deſire things unlawful, covetous and laſcivious deſires, the Covenant ſatisfies them not at all, but rather condemns them. 2. Deſires may terminat on lawful objects, in an irregular way, and the Covenant ſatisfies them not, a perſon may have deſires after the Covenant, and yet theſe deſires may prove very irregular.

There are three kinds of deſires about the Covenant it ſelf, and all theſe may be irregular deſires. 1. Sometimes we deſire the Bleſſings of the Covenant, without a right to the Covenant; as if one would deſire the fruit of an Apple-tree, without a right to the Tree. 2. And ſometimes we deſire the Bleſſings of the Covenant, and forgets the Commands. 3. And ſometimes we may deſire the promiſes of peace and conſolation, without the promiſes of Effectual Calling; theſe deſires terminat on lawful objects, but they are irregular deſires, and the Covenant will

will not ſatisfie them; but all our regular deſires, all that are warrantable and according to the Covenant, there is in the Covenant ſatisfaction to them all; the perſon that hath a Covenant-relation to God, they have in that relation, ſatisfaction to all their deſires.

Without inſiſting further in clearing the words, I will take one Obſervation, and readily follow it in three or four Sermons, for its a great Truth, and as important a truth, as any that hath yet occurred in this Verſe, and the Obſervation ſhal be this?

Doctrine. *That the Covenant is ſatisfaction to all our deſires:* if God hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, its that which may ſatisfie all my deſires; its true, it will not ſatisfie our irregular and unwarrantable deſires, it will not ſatisfie covetous and laſcivious deſires: I remember I read of a man, who came to a Philoſopher, O ſaith he, he is a happy man that hath all his deſires; the Philoſopher anſwered, he is a happy man, but a far happier man that deſires nothing but what he ought to deſire: ſo if we deſire nothing but what we ought to deſire, the Covenant will ſatisfie all our deſires. This ſhal be the Theme that I reſolve to follow a little, that an intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant, is ſatisfaction to all our lawful deſires. It will be a great work to convince you of this, but I hope to make it appear from very rational grounds, and ſo let you ſee, that the torment we have in our life, its not from want of grounds of ſatisfaction to our deſires, but from the irregularity of our deſires, we go in our deſires beyond what we ought.

That the Covenant affords ground of ſatisfaction to all our deſires, before I prove it, I muſt give you this Caution as introductory to it: ſatisfaction of deſires conſiſts in two things, 1. The object that ſatisfies muſt be adequat and full, it muſt be as comprehenſive as the deſires are large, otherways it cannot ſatisfie; it is very obſervable that School-men teach, that in glory, if there were one deſire unſatisfied, it would be a degree of miſery he that hath an appetite, and hath his deſire unſatisfied, is in ſo far miſerable; and if there were one deſire, and one thing in our appetite not ſatisfied, it would be a degree of miſery; ſo, what is ſatisfying to deſires, muſt be

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adequat and fully proportioned to the deſire. 2. As it muſt be a full, ſo it muſt be a ſuitable ſatisfaction, as ſome deſcribe it, it conſiſts in a ſuitableneſs of the object to the faculty; ſo that if ye ask, what is that which ſatisfies the deſires of the Soul: Its a full object, and an object ſuitable to all the faculties of the Soul; ſo when we ſay, the Covenant ſatisfies all our deſires, there are two things we muſt inſtruct to you, that the Covenant is full and comprehenſive of all the good we can deſire, and that theſe good things are ſuitable to our deſires: theſe two I ſhal labour to make out in this Sermon, that I may prove that the Covenant is ſatisfaction to all our deſires, I ſhal firſt prove it to be full and adequat, and then prove it to be ſuitable, and conſequently prove it full ſatisfaction to all our deſires.

Firſt, That the Covenant is full, abundantly adequat and comprehenſive of all the things we can warrantably deſire: for clearing of this. I will offer you firſt ſome general proofs of it, and ſecondly ſome particular and ſpecial proofs of it.

Firſt, I will offer you ſome general proofs of it, and by way of introduction to them, I will give you this in the entry, *That God in the Covenant reſolved to lay himſelf out to the outmoſt*, *Mat.* 22. the Goſpel-offers in the Covenant, are like to a certain King, that made a Marriage-feaſt, at the Marriage of his only Son; a King making a Feaſt, and making a Marriage-feaſt, at the Marriage of his only Son, thou may be ſure he would lay himſelf out to the outmoſt at that Feaſt, ſo the Lord hath laid himſelf out to the outmoſt in the Covenant: This being generally premiſed, it may make you expect, that it will not be difficult to prove, that the Covenant contains ſatisfaction to all our deſires.

And I will offer you theſe four general proofs of it, 1. The Covenant contains all the excellencies that are to be found in the Creatures; ordinarly our deſires they are regulat by our ſenſes, like *Eva* we ſee the Apple, and we have an appetite after it; according as we ſee, our appetite and our deſires are regulat by hearing and ſeeing: there is nothing excellent that ever we heard of, or ſaw, but its contained in the Covenant; take a view of the Covenant, and ye will find in it the Promiſes of a King-

dom;

dom; nay more, of Bread, Wine, Milk, Honey, Myrrh, Spices; ye will find alſo in the Covenant, promiſes of Fountains, Gardens, Beds of Roſes, ye will find Gold, Linen, Eye-ſalve; there are ſome Divines have taken pains in ſome of their Books, to gather all the ſimilitudes together, and they evidence, that there is nothing excellent in the Creature, but its promiſed in the Covenant; if a man have a deſire after Gold, and fine Gold, if he have a deſire after Linen, and fine Linen, after Bread, Wine, Spices, Beauty, ye will find one, who is white and ruddy, hath promiſed all theſe in the Covenant; what ever it be that a man hath an appetite after, ye will find it in the Covenant; and ſince the Covenant contains all theſe things that are excellent among the Creatures, is it any wonder that it ſatisfies all deſires? all pleaſure, profit, honour, or whatever the appetite can be carried after, is promiſed in the Covenant; and which is remarkable, Gold, Bread, Wine, fine Linen, *&c.* they are but ſhadows that are to be found among the Creatures, the ſubſtance is only to be found in the Covenant: Its called fine Gold, to diſtinguiſh it from Gold in the Earth, Its called fine Linen, for all other Linens are but black in compariſon of this; its called Eye-ſalve, for Salves may be Salves to our finger when it is cut, but its much to make up Eye-ſalve; all excellencies in the Creature, are only to be found in the Creature in the Shell, and are to be found in the Covenant in the Kernel. 2. All that is in glory, and all that is in Heaven, are contained in the Covenant: the Prophet tells us *Iſaiah* 64. 4. *Since the beginning of the World men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye ſeen, O God, beſides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.* It is a ſtrange deſcription given of Heaven in Scripture, *Rev.* 21. 10. *It is called a city, and a great city,* and *verſe* 12. *The wall of it hath twelve gates,* and *verſ.* 14. *It hath twelve foundations,* and *verſe* 19. *The foundations of the wall of the city, are garniſhed with precious ſtones,* and *verſ.* 21. *The ſtreets of the city are pure gold,* and *verſ.* 22. and 23. *There is no Temple there, and there is no need of the Sun there, for the Lamb is the Temple of it, and the Sun is the light of it*; now, ear hath not heard, nor eye hath not ſeen a City like that which is deſcribed there, and the Covenant holds out all theſe; therefore

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ſome have well obſerved on this Text, that the Covenant not only ſatisfies all our deſires, but it contains ſomething more than our deſires, our deſires would never have reached the longing after ſuch a City, that had ſuch gates, and ſuch foundations, and ſtreets, *&c.* So the Covenant muſt contain ſatisfaction to all our deſires, for all the excellencies in the Creature, and all the excellencies of Glory, are promiſed in the Covenant. 3. The Covenant muſt ſatisfie all our deſires, in regard it holds out to us whatever is in God; his infinit Attributes, his Mercy, his Goodneſs, his Truth, his Power, all theſe are made over to us in the Covenant; there is more in God than we can deſire, nay, there is ſomething in God, that it is impoſſible for our wit to reach: Its remarkable *Mat.* 22. 31. Chriſt proves againſt the Sadducees the Reſurrection from the dead, from that word he ſpake to *Moſes* at the burning Buſh, *I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*: All the Philoſophers on earth, could never have drawn that conſequence out of that word: would not any have thought it ſo remote a proof of the Reſurrection, that no Phyſician, no Philoſopher, nor no Juriſt could have drawn ſuch a conſequence, unleſs Chriſt had done it himſelf? There is ſomewhat in that word, *my God, and I am the God of Abraham*, &c. That will require Chriſt to explain it. Now, in the Covenant he hath made over himſelf to us, and all that he hath, *I will be thy God*, this ſhal be my Covenant with you, *I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people*; and is not this ſatisfaction to all our deſires? But 4. To evidence this yet further, that there is a ſatisfaction to all our deſires, and a compleat ſatisfaction to all our regular deſires in the Covenant, ye would take notice what I hinted at, when firſt I entred on this Verſe; there is a threefold Covenant neceſſary, to make up compleat ſatisfaction and ſecurity to our deſires, and all the three kinds of Covenants concur in the Covenant of Grace. 1. There paſſes betwixt men a Covenant of War, and a Covenant of Peace, they are bound by that Covenant in offenſive and defenſive Leagues, there is a mutual Peace betwixt them, and a mutual War againſt the ſame enemies, they have the ſame friends and the ſame foes, this is a thing very

very neceſſary in ſatisfaction to our deſires, and this is in the Covenant of Grace, there is a reconciliation, a Peace made up, and all the Articles of it are very favourable and advantagious. 2. To make up ſatisfaction to our deſires, it is neceſſary betwixt Nations that enter in Covenant, that there be a Covenant of Commerce and Traffick, they will Import and Export Goods; ſo here, ſometimes he imports the Bleſſings of Heaven, and ſometimes he will export other Goods, not to wrong us, but to ſatisfie our deſires. 3. There is a Marriage-covenant; now what can be more deſirable, to ſatisfie our deſires, than theſe three? for the Covenant partakes of all theſe three, and what can be more required of God, to ſatisfie allour deſires? To be brief, the Covenant is holden out ſo, as it holds out things of infinite excellency, and our appetite being finit, its impoſſible for us to have deſires ſuitable, and adequat to the Covenant; *David* had ſaid nothing but Truth, if he had ſaid, The Covenant is ſatisfaction beyond my deſires. Now lay the four together, and ye will ſee, that ſince God was reſolved to lay himſelf out to the outmoſt according to his own heart, to ſatisfie all our deſires, no wonder the Covenant ſatisfie our deſires, ſince it contains all the Excellencies of the Creature, and all that is in Heaven, and all that is in God, and all that there is made over and ſecured to us, not only a Covenant of Peace and War, and a Covenant of Traffick, but alſo a Marriage-covenant, wherein our Maker becomes our Husband. Theſe generals contribute ſomewhat to evidence, that the Covenant may ſatisfie all our regular and warrantable deſires.

I will follow the reſt with anſwering five or ſix Queſtions that may occur about this, that the Covenant ſatisfies all our deſires, and they will contribute much to clear and confirm, that there is in this Covenant ſatisfaction to all our deſires.

Queſt. 1. It may be asked, ſuppoſe the Covenant be full and ſuitable, yet it ſatisfies not all deſires, unleſs they have a right to that fullneſs; its a very difficult thing to ſatisfie all deſires, a man proves not the Covenant to ſatisfie all deſires, that proves it to be full and ſuitable, but I have not a right to it.

Anſw. For anſwer to this, this will be no Exception againſt the Covenants ſatisfying all deſires, if ye take notice

notice of three things. 1. Its true indeed, it may be a very ordinary caſe I confeſs, the Covenant is full and very ſuitable, but my deſire is to have a right and ſatisfaction in the Covenant. In Anſwer to the Queſtion, I ſay firſt, the Covenant it offers a Right, thou could deſire no more in the offer of a Right, than the Covenant holds forth, thy deſire is ſatisfied to the full, thou art offered all the Excellencies in the Creature, and all that is in Heaven, and all that is in God, there is no leſs offered thee in the Covenant, thy deſires are ſatisfied to the full as to the offer, and as to the terms on which the Offer is made, there is no more required of thee in the Covenant, than to take all theſe and make them thine; no more but take and accept them, would thou have the Covenant made to thee, whether thou accept of the terms or not? So in the Covenant, thou has the offer of a Right, on the eaſieſt terms our heart could imagine. 2. Thou that ſays, the Covenant anſwers not all my deſire, I would have thee to conſider in the ſecond place, all that get a right to the Covenant, the right to it is not of their buying or meriting, but it comes through the grace of the Covenant; ſo it may ſatisfie all thy deſires, as to this, the Price of the Right is payed in the Covenant, the offer of the Right is payed in the Covenant, ſo thy Right to the Covenant comes through the grace of the Covenant, there is not only the offer of a Right, but the communication of a Right, and even that communication of a Right, comes through the grace of the Covenant. 3. I would have thee that makes this exception, that thou has no Right to the Covenant, becauſe it anſwers not all thy deſires; do but accept of this Covenant, and imbrace Chriſt on the eaſieſt terms, and thou ſhalt find thy Right to the Covenant confirmed by the Covenant; to be brief, thy deſire of a Right to the Covenant may be ſatisfied, if thou wilt but add to thy deſires, the accepting of a Covenant, and imbracing of the offer; put forth thy trembling hand and take the Covenant, and thou ſhal find it ſatisfie thy deſire, as to thy right to the Covenant, ſo there is none can juſtly except, that the Covenant ſatisfies not all deſires, if they deſire a right to the Covenant; I tell thee again, if thou will but accept of and imbrace this Covenant, I make the offer to thee in his Name this day, take

it;

it, and its thine. But to confirm it the better, I will offer thee two or three things, 1. If thy deſire be of a right to the Covenant, if thou accept of the offer thy deſires ſhal be ſatisfied, notwithſtanding of all thy former guilt, if thou have a deſire of a right and intereſt in the Covenant, though thou were a Murderer, a Whoremonger, a Perſecuter or Blaſphemer, thou ſhalt have thy deſires ſatisfied; the Covenant excludes not thee, but rather it tells thee, though thou haſt played the Harlot with many Lovers, yet return unto me. 2. The Covenant will not ſtand at the weakneſs of thy Faith, if thou be one that deſires a right to the Covenant, and if thou accept of it, though thou take it with a trembling hand, and with a palſie arm, though it be a trembling and ſhaking Faith, if thou have a deſire to accept the Covenant, there is in the Covenant that which will ſatisfie all thy deſires, though thy Faith be but like a grain of muſtard ſeed, or a bruiſed reed, or a ſmoaking flax, if it be ſincere, it will ſatisfie thy deſires if thou accept the Covenant. But 3. If thou accept the Covenant, it ſhal ſatisfie thy deſires, and ſatisfie thee, as to thy right of it, though thy Faith be mingled with much corruption, ſuppoſe thou cannot ſay *I believe*, yet ſay, I accept, and let the next words be, Lord, help my unbelief. 4. If thou will accept this Covenant, thou ſhalt be ſatisfied in thy deſires of a right to it, though thou have no price in thy hand to give, if thou have no money, yet thou may buy without money, its God that ſells, and he ſells without money and without price; ſo thou canſt ſay, thou has no price to give for a right to it, the Covenant may ſatisfie thy deſires in that, for the price is payed in the Covenant; ſo I ſuppoſe, the firſt Objection is ſatisfied, for I have holden out the Covenant to be full, containing all that's in the Creature, all that is in Heaven, & all that is in God; if thou ſhalt ſay, it ſatisfies not my deſires, I deſire a right to it, and cannot win at it, but as to the offer of a right, and accepting of the leaſt Faith, for all former guilt, and a Faith mingled with corruption, and a faith that cannot buy, becauſe they have no money, the Covenant diſpenſes with all theſe; Therefore if thou be not ſatisfied in thy deſires of a Right, the fault is not in the Covenant, but in thy ſelf, for thy deſires of a Right,

comes

comes not to be satisfied, but through the Covenant.

SERMON XXXIV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

IT must be an Excellent thing that can satisfie all our desires; how vast are our desires, and how unsatisfiable? would ye then know what it is that satisfies all our desires, the Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, and this is all my desire? I was offering you some Reasons, why the Covenant satisfies all our desires. I was entering to answer some Objections, that would contribute to clear it, I named one, two or three more I will name you, and then shal come to the Application.

Object. 1. It may be objected in the first place, that only can satisfie all our desires, which being alone enjoyed is satisfactory, take a man in prison, in poverty, in Contempt, will the Covenant alone satisfie him? have we not lawful desires after Meat or after Apparel? and if these be nothing, can the Covenant satisfie all desires? for answer to this, ye shal notice three things.

1. That all outward things, in so far as they are necessar (and we can only warrantably desire them, in so far as they are necessar) are promised in the Covenant: its a rare thing for one to die of hunger, thousands die of Surfeit and Gluttony, where one dies of Hunger, and yet the Covenant satisfies their desires as to necessaries. 2. Ye shal notice, suppose there were want of necessaries, yet its accomplished and made up in other things, Gold will compense Brass and Copper, he that hath God, and a Right to Heaven, will hardly complain of the want of Health; he corrected his word well that said, there is nothing left me but God, and but God said he, and what would I have more? 3. The Covenant alone will satisfie

he all desires, in regard it compenses and makes up any thing that we can desire that is wanting; a remarkable instance ye have of this in the Bible, *Jacob* he got the Blessing, *Esau* he got the fat of the earth. *Gen.* 27. *Esau* cometh to meet *Jacob* with four hundred men, *Jacob* offereth him a present, *Gen.* 33. *Esau* he refuses to take it, I will not take it, says he, for I have enough, take it my brother, says *Jacob*, for *I have all*: now, he had not the fat of the earth, if he would have counted his whole Stock, it would have but amounted to two Bands, but he had the Blessing, God was become the God of *Jacob*, he had seen God in a Vision at *Bethel*, and God had blest him, therefore he can say, take it my Brother, for *I have all*; now he that hath all, hath satisfaction to all his desires, so the Covenant alone holding out Christ and the Father in our offer, is alone satisfying.

Object. 2. Another Objection may be made against this, my heart desires, says some, the possession of the Promise, the accomplishment of the Promise is not the Covenant, my heart would have the accomplishment, I would have the Peace, the Joy, the Consolation that is promised, and I would be at the Heaven promised; now how can the Covenant satisfie all desires? it contains excellent promises indeed, but it contains not the Peace, the Heaven, and the Joy promised, and how then can it satisfie all my desires?

Answ. For opening this to you, I desire ye may take notice of three things. 1. Ye must take notice, that there is a twofold Inheritance; or a twofold Possession; there is a possession of the Promise, and a possession of the thing promised; several times Believers are called in the Bible, Heirs of the Promise, was ever a man called an Heir of the Charter, he may be called Heir of the Land that the Charter carries; but the Believer may be called an Heir of the Promise, the reason is, because the Promise is a great part of the Inheritance, a person in Covenant with God, is an Heir of the Promise, as *Isaac* and *Jacob* are called; so that there is an Inheritance in the Promise, as well as in the thing promised; a very necessary thing to be observed, for there are many precious to God who think, if they were in Heaven, and if they enjoyed the glory that is to be had there, they would

count themſelves as Heirs, but while thou haſt a Promiſe, thou art poſſeſſing an Inheritance, for the Covenant it ſelf is a kind of Poſſeſſion; thou that ſays, thou would be poſſeſt in the Promiſe, and its no words, and a Covenant thou would be put off with, thou miſtakes, for the Covenant and the Promiſe is an Inheritance, and thou art no Minor in the caſe, but art poſſeſſing as a Major.

2. Take notice ye that would be at the Poſſeſſion of the Promiſe, and that thinks all your deſires will not be ſatiſfied until then, that the Covenant, though it put you not in the poſſeſſion of the Promiſe, yet it makes the Poſſeſſion as ſure, as if it were in your hand; that which we have in a promiſe from God, its even as ſure as if it were in poſſeſſion; its remarkable, *Pſal.* 3. 7. The Pſalm is intitled, a Pſalm of *David* when he fled from *Abſalom* his Son, *Thou haſt ſmitten all mine enemies upon the cheek, thou haſt broken the teeth of the ungodly*: how could they be broken, when he was flying from *Abſalom*? But *David* had a promiſe for it, and he counts it as ſure as if it were in his hand; its true its not ſo ſweet nor ſo refreſhing, as if it were in hand, but its as ſure; ſo ye ſee, though the Covenant put us not in poſſeſſion of the promiſe, yet it holds forth that which is as ſure, as if it were in poſſeſſion. But the third thing I will give you, that will more fully anſwer the Queſtion, and remove the Objection; that the delay of the poſſeſſion of the promiſe, is no denyal of it, and to deſire the poſſeſſion of the promiſe, except it be in the method of the Covenant, it is an irregular deſire; ye heard, that the Covenant ſatisfies all regular and warrantable deſires, but to deſire the poſſeſſion of a thing, before we have ſought for it, and done that for which we came into the world, is an irregular deſire; ſo if thou ſay, I have a great deſire of the poſſeſſion of the Peace, the Joy and the Heaven, that the Covenant holds forth, thou art irregular in thy deſire; would thou be at the poſſeſſion before thou haſt run the race? or would thou be at the Crown, before thou haſt foughten the battel? that is an irregular deſire, and the Covenant is not to ſatisfie theſe deſires, the Covenant poſſeſſes thee in the promiſe, and that's, an Inheritance, and makes it as ſure, as if it were in poſſeſſion.

Object. 3. There are lawful deſires of the Creatures, and

of eſchewing the Croſs, and the Covenant ſatisfies them not; may we not warrantably deſire convenient Food, many ſeek no more from God, and gets it not: they may have hundreds of Temptations about their Food, and how to eſchew the Croſs, and doeth the Covenant ſatisfie all their deſires? For anſwer to this, I would have you notice theſe things.

Anſwer, 1. Take notice, that we may deſire indeed lawful convenient Food, and it may be denyed, and the removing of the Croſs, and it may be denyed, but in this caſe, the Lord ſatisfies the deſire of our neceſſity, however he ſatisfies not our appetite, he may ſatisfie the cry of our need; if he ſhal kill us with Hunger, why not? if Famine be the poſt to bring us home to our Fathers houſe, why not as well as a Fever? Whatever be the way he bring us home, he ſatisfies the ſcope of our deſires, the ſcope of our deſires to him for temporal things, if they be lawful, they run in this Channel, that he would give us the things of time, in ſubordination to the things of Eternity, if we ſeek them otherways, we ſeek them irregularly, we ſeek Bread and Cloaths to help us to Heaven, but if he make Famine, and Nakedneſs to help us to Heaven, he ſatisfies our deſires; ſometimes we will go to God, and cry, Lord give me this outward Mercy, and remove this Croſs, for that will be helpful for my Heaven, if he deny the Mercy, and keep on the Rod, and yet help thee to Heaven, he ſatisfies thy deſire; as if a Patient ſhould cry to a Phyſician, O! I am burning in a Fever, give me water to drink; but he makes a Cordial and gives him to cool him, he grants his deſire, though he give not water to drink; ſo in affliction we cry, Lord, remove this affliction, and help me to Heaven; he lets the affliction ly on, and helps thee to Heaven, does he not grant thy deſire? we are not carvers of our own Lot, our deſires about temporal things may be granted, when the particular way and manner of it may be removed, he takes one way for the end, and we would take another; we cry to be brought to Heaven in a Chariot, and he thinks fit if we ſhould be brought in a Cart, we would be at glory with a fair wind, and he thinks fit in a croſs wind; but if we come to glory, as well with a croſs wind, as a fair wind

the desire is granted. Another thing I would have you consider, is this, Though we desire temporal things, and get no satisfaction, yet the Covenant may satisfie our desires, the reason is, its rare to find us regular in temporal things; such a Woman would have her Husband living, and she would quite God many other things, if he would not remove the delight of her eyes; another does so with her Child, and yet they both die, notwithstanding God makes it up, and he grants their desire, they think they cannot have contentment in the World but in such a Lot, they have swallowed and drowned all their contentment, if that be taken away; the case is so with *David*, there is a Child *Bathsheba* bare in Adultery, the Child falls Sick and dies, he lyes on the ground, while the Child is lying sick, and will not eat all that time, after he hath cryed to the Lord, the Child dies, was it not much better, the same Woman bore him a *Solomon*, than that the Child begotten in Adultery should live; to be brief, there is hardly any Objection can be brought from a Christians case, or from their worldly desires, but they may be all abundantly answered from this, that the Covenant is satisfaction to all our desires.

I would speak a little to the Application and Practical part of the Point, in regard its a thing of great Importance, I resolve to fall from this Branch of the Verse, and therefore will apply it, supposing that I have proven it abundantly.

Use 1. And I will apply it in three or four *Uses*, *First*, Is the Covenant satisfaction to all our desires? Then it informs of three or four things. 1. It informs of what an excellent thing the Covenant must be; Riches may satisfie the Covetous, and Honour may satisfie the Ambitious, and uncleanness and Whoredom may satisfie the Lascivious; but what a thing is there that will satisfie all desires? that is allanerly to be found in God, and in the Covenant, ye that would have the thing in one Jewel, that the generality of men are seeking in many pieces of Copper Coin, get an interest in the Covenant, and it will satisfie all your desires, O! but it must be an excellent Jewel, that will pay off all your Debt. 2. It informs what is the reason, that Believers have such a deal of quietness, even in the worst of cases, let them be

in Priſon, let them be in a Fever, in reproach, or in Poverty, yet they have a great deal of ſweet quietneſs; I will tell you, they have all their deſires ſatisfied in the Covenant, they deſire no more; and a man that hath all his deſires, in what condition ſoever he be, he is quiet; the great ground of our diſquieting is, we want ſomething we deſire, but a Believer that can ſay, he hath made with me a Covenant, he hath Bread, Apparel, Wine, Milk, Gold, Fountains, Kingdoms, Cities, and he hath them all in the Covenant; therefore no wonder, if men labour to take their quietneſs from them, if devils labour to take their quietneſs from them, yet they have ſtill a great deal of quietneſs, for they have all their deſires, and they are all contained in the Covenant. 3. It informs of a third thing, of what is the reaſon of all the exerciſe of Conſcience, and diſquietings that Believers have, would ye know what it is, there is one thing that is all their deſires, which is their ſecurity in the Covenant: now, no wonder, when they are croſt in that which is all their deſire, to ſee them hanging down their head, and the feeble knees ſmiting one another, for when they are croſt in their intereſt in the Covenant, they are not croſt in a triffle, but in that which is all their deſire; ſo ye may ſee the reaſon of their peace, and their trouble, (one thing have they deſired of the Lord, as it is *Pſal.* 27.) and as one thing goes ill or well, accordingly have they peace or not. 4. Is the Covenant all their deſire? it informs of what a different nature the Spirit of Believers, and the Spirit of the Ungodly are; there are many they never care for the Covenant, many ſay, Who will give us Corn and Wine, and many hunt after their Luſts, its a wonder to ſee the great odds, betwixt the deſire of Believers and ungodly men, even as great odds as betwixt Eaſt and Weſt, all their deſires are ſatisfied, if they can ſay, *God hath made with me a Covenant*, wherein he hath made over himſelf, and his Son, and all that he hath; hardly will there a Croſs come, that will ly heavy on, no wonder, for they have all their deſires, and a man cannot count himſelf croſt, that hath all his deſires.

Uſe 2. Secondly, for Uſe, is the Covenant all the deſires of the Believer: Then I would exhort you to make it all your deſire. O! we are plagued ſometimes with

Laſcivious

Laſcivious, Earthly and frothy deſires, how excellently did the Philoſopher *Socrates* anſwer the man that came to him, and ſaid, O! ſays he, He is a happy man that hath all his deſires, but ſays he, He is a happier man that deſires nothing, but what he may lawfully deſire; labour to get your deſires regulat according to the Covenant, that there may be nothing in your deſires, but what is contained in the Covenant. I would preſs this with ſeveral Motives and Conſiderations, O! but the Perſon is come to a noble Lot in his way to Glory, that hath his deſires regulat, according the Covenant, whether they be deſires for the Church of God, or for themſelves.

Readily ye may ask, How ſhal we get our deſires regulat according to the Covenant? I will offer you two remarkable helps, and two Motives, to get your deſires regulat according to the Covenant.

Firſt then, for help to get your deſires regulat according to the Covenant, take theſe four things, 1. I would exhort you to ſtudy the Covenant, it will be an excellent help, to get your deſires regulat according to the Covenant, if ye be acquaint with it; the Covenant ſhould be the Glaſs ye ſhould be looking into, and bringing your deſires to it, and the Covenant, like a face in the glaſs, ſhould reſemble one another; believe it, Chriſtian, who minds to come to Heaven, there is nothing thou needs, either for thy beeing or thy well-beeing, but its contained in the Covenant; therefore be a ſtudent of it, and be well acquaint with it, it holds forth the things of Time, and things of Eternity, all the Excellencies of God, all that is communicable to creatures, are in the Covenant; therefore, if thou would have thy deſires regulat according to the Covenant, be a ſtudent of the Covenant. A ſecond Direction is, conſider ſeriouſly, there is nothing thou can deſire in Faith, except it be promiſed mercy, and contained in the Covenant; we have a great Queſtion with the Patrons of Liturgie, the *Engliſh* ſervice Book, ſome Divines write againſt it, ſay they, there are many Prayers in it, for things not promiſed, and we can only pray in faith, for what is promiſed; we can warrantably pray for nothing, but a promiſed mercy, for Faith is aways founded on the Promiſe; ſo it is objected, if the Prayer go beyond its Object, its a prayer of the Service-

Book,

Book, and I believe ſome pray in paſſion againſt their Neighbour, and they pray for themſelves ignorantly, as their Opinion leads them, but if it be not a prayer within the Covenant, it will do no good, for Faith is a believing in the Promiſe, and if thou prays not in Faith, thou prays in ſin: ſo this may be a preſſing conſideration, that our prayer will never be heard, though it be preſented with as many Tears as there are Waters in the Ocean, if if it be not according to the Covenant. A 3*d* Direction, endeavour a work of mortification in thy deſires, unleſs thy deſires be mortified, they will go beyond the bounds of the Covenant; therefore in effectual calling, there is eſpecially intended by the Spirit of God, the mortification of our deſires, we are not to deſire as Chriſt ſaid to the Mother of *Zebedees* Children, *Ye deſire*, ſays he, *ye know not what*, ſhe deſired one of her Sons to ſit upon his right hand, and the other on his left, ſhe would fain have the perſons great that ſhe loved, were we mortifying our deſires, we would have another kind of life of it in the world, than we have, the thing that torments us in the world, we have a deſire after this and that, and the third thing, and are tormented becauſe our deſires are not accompliſhed; but were there a Mortification of our deſires, and a bringing them according to the Covenant, we might have a ſweet and contented life in the world, beyond what we have: I heard a paſſage of an Old Man, here am I, ſays he, that in my life deſired nothing, but what I got, and I wanted nothing of what I deſired, if we could get our deſires regulat according to the Promiſes, and agreeable to them, what a ſweet and contented life might we have in the Wilderneſs; therefore labour to mortifie your deſires, A 4*th* Direction is, to labour to deſire all temporal things ſubmiſſively; he did caſt us a noble Copy, that ſaid, *Father, let this cup depart from me, yet not my will be done, but let thy will be done*: what ever temporal Lot we come under, if our deſires be according to the Covenant. (let your deſires be for the life of your Husband, or this Friend, or that Child) they will be with ſubmiſſion, *not my will, but thine be done*. Now theſe four would help you excellently to get your deſires regulat according to the Covenant.

I will preſs theſe four with theſe two motives. 1. Know this Chriſtian, that the great reaſon of all the anxiety and torment of thy life, flows not ſo much from thy croſſes, as from thy deſires; the great reaſon of all our torment and anxiety of our life, is not, that God afflicts, but that our deſires are contradicted, readily affliction is according to our apprehenſion, the only thing that makes the croſs light to one, and heavy to another is, the temper of the Spirit; if we could get the victory over our deſires, we might go through the World ſinging, hardly would we be tormented with the things that torments us; one deſires brave apparel, another honour, a third good entertainment, and they want them, its not the want of them that is the croſs, but their deſire that makes it the croſs; its evident from this, one will want their deſires, and not be croſt; one will take well with a reeky Cottage, and a piece of brown Bread, that another would account a croſs; the reaſon is; the ones deſire is not like the other. A ſecond motive is, it was one of the great reaſons that made Chriſt have ſo contented a life in the World, there was hardly a man the Father had croſt more, than he did him, and yet ye find him never diſcompoſed, he is many times at *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts. but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*; he is ſometimes led to the Wilderneſs, and tempted of the Devil, and the Prince of this World comes againſt him, but hath nothing within him, for he had no deſires, therefore he is not diſquieted, he will come to an Hill-ſide, and ſleep all night, another time he will be upon the ſea all night, another time he came to *Jacobs* Well, and ſought a drink of Water, he had Tribute to pay when *Ceſars* Tribute was to pay, never one had more croſſes, and more quietneſs, the reaſon is, he had no deſires; if we could get the victory over our pride, our ambition, our laſciviouſneſs; the hundred part of what we have would ſatisfie us, but its our appetite, and not our neceſſity, that hath a great influence on our Torment.

Uſe 3, Thirdly for Uſe, Is the Covenant ſatisfaction to all our deſires? Then the third Uſe is of Conſolation, and it ſpeaks comfortably, eſpecially to three ſorts. 1. To them that it may be, have not much ſenſe, and experimental

mental proof of God, readily when we go to pray, he hides, he neither gives liberty to pray, nor anſwers he their prayer, ſhall he ſit down and ſay, he hath no ſatisfaction to his deſires? No, if he lay in a part of the Covenant to you, the Covenant muſt be taken for the Inheritance, ſo long as we are Minors, we muſt look on the Promiſes as an heritage; and if he lay in a Promiſe, or a part of the Covenant to thee, bring not in a bad report of him, to ſay thy deſires are not ſatisfied, I came to his door, and I came from it as hungry as I went, and yet he hath given thee a part of the Covenant: Its lamentable to ſee ſo excellent a Covenant, purchaſed by ſuch a perſon, contrived by ſuch a Mediator, and to ſee Believers lay ſo little weight on it; ſuppoſe he deny thee ſenſe in thy ſpiritual intereſt, yet thou haſt ground to ſing, that thou haſt ſatisfaction to thy deſires, if he lay in a part of the Covenant, and clear up thy Intereſt in it. 2*ly*. For conſolation, they that go through the World loaden with croſſes, they hardly find the World but ſcouling on them, they may be prone to bring up an ill report on God, to ſay, he gives other folk their deſires, but gives not me mine: but hath he given thee the Covenant, and wilt thou ſay any thing to thy Intereſt in the Covenant? And wilt thou yet ſay, he hath not given thee thy deſires? If he hath not given thee thy deſires, they are irregular, go and repent for thy deſires. Haſt thou not in the Covenant drink indeed, Wine, Milk, Honey, Gold, Eye-ſalve, Fields, Fountains, Kingdoms, Cities? And yet wilt thou ſay he hath not given thee all thy deſires? Nay more, haſt thou the City that hath the twelve Foundations? Hath he made over by Covenant all that is in God? Remember ye that Note, that in the Covenant, God lays himſelf out to the outmoſt, like a certain King making a feaſt at the Marriage of his only Son, if ever a feaſt be great, it will be the feaſt of a King, and the feaſt of a King at the Marriage of his only Son: the ſcope of it is, that God lays himſelf out to the outmoſt, and yet ſhalt thou ſay, he anſwers not all thy deſires? Go not to complain of your Straw-bed, nor of your Bread, though it were never ſo brown, if ye have an intereſt in this Covenant, ye have all your deſires, and more than ye can deſire, for there is ſome thing in God

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our appetite cannot deſire. 3*ly*. It ſpeaks comfortably to them, who know not what may be before them. O! may ſome ſay, if I go forward, I will fall over head and ears and all; and another ſays, O! I am afraid, I fall away, and many Torment themſelves with what is to come, and the evil they feared fell on them; but why art thou Tormented, that haſt an Intereſt in the Covenant? If thou have that, thou haſt all that thy heart can deſire. I will cloſe all with exhorting all of you, to labour to regulat your deſires according to the Covenant, when ye find ye deſire a thing ye cannot produce a Promiſe for, ſuſpect it as an unwarrantable deſire, and all that hath gotten the victory over the corruption of their heart, if ye can go this night and ly down, and appeal to him that is the ſearcher of the heart, ye deſire no more than what is promiſed, its an evidence he hath mortified your deſires, and brought you under the Bond of the Covenant; bleſſed are they that can ſay, the Lord hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, and I deſire no more; if he would make me a King, nay, and give me all that is betwixt the riſing of the Sun, and the going down thereof, I deſire no more, for he hath made with me a Covenant.

SERMON XXXV.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

David is deſcribing the Covenant that God made with him, that it was everlaſting, and well ordered, and ſure; he builds two great Concluſions on it, this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire; the latter of theſe I have ſpoken to, its a great mercy, when we can have our deſires regulat according to the Covenant; when there is nothing deſired, but promiſed mercies; irregular deſires are the great foundation of the Torment of our life, they cannot chooſe but have ſweet contentment, and

and a life full of Tranquility, that have gotten the victory over their deſires, not warranted by the Covenant.

But I will ſay no more of this, before I leave theſe two, there is one thing yet lying in them, *all my ſalvation, and all my deſire*; the two joyned together imports, that the Covenant is a perfect Charter, its a very rational Deduction from it. That which is all the ground of the hope of Salvation, and that which is ſatisfaction to all deſires, muſt be a perfect Covenant, therefore, before I leave the handling of this Character of the Covenant, I will take in this, and handle it this day.

Doctrine, *That the Covenant of Grace made with believers, is a perfect Covenant.* It is a very uſeful Character of it, and comfortable, and therefore hearken unto it; it may be ſaid of the Covenant, which *David Pſal.* 19:7. ſays, *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul*; and that which he he ſays, Pſal. 119. 96. *I have ſeen an end of all perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*; Its as much as, I can ſee no end of thy Commands, they are ſo full and ſo perfect; this is an excellent character and property of the Covenant; whereas in other things, we can ſee nothing but vanity and emptineſs, and froth, there is a perfection in the Covenant.

That I may the more diſtinctly handle this, I will propoſe theſe four things to be dwelt on. 1. I will prove by ſome reaſons, that the Covenant of God is a perfect Covenant, 2*ly*. I will enquire in what reſpect it is perfect. 3*ly*. I ſhall clear ſome Queſtions and Anſwer ſome Objections againſt its perfection: and in the laſt place, I ſhall dwell on the practical part of it.

Reaſon Firſt. For ſome Reaſons to prove, that the Covenant is perfect; and indeed its not eaſie to believe the Covenant to be perfect, every one will have their Objection againſt it; yet there are theſe four things, that will very ſtrongly concur to demonſtrat that it is a perfect Covenant. 1. That to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be wanting, muſt be a perfect Covenant, that is the proper definition of perfection; now this agrees well to the Covenant, there is nothing wanting in it, and nothing can be added to it, it is remarkable Rev. 22. *He that adds to the words of this Propheſie, God ſhall add to him the plagues written in this book; and he that takes from it, God*

ſhall

ſhall take his name out of the book of life. That isone ſure reaſon,to prove it a perfect Covenant. Papiſtstell us,they ſay they add no corrupt additions, but perfecting additions, to the words of this Book: now, corrupt additions is a contradiction, for a corruption is not an addition, but the Covenant is ſo perfect, as whoſoever he be that offers to add to the words of this Book, God will add to him the plagues of this Book, and whoſoever he be that takes from it,God will take his name out of the Book of life.

Reaſ. 2. That Covenant that is ſufficient to make the man of God perfect, muſt be a perfect Covenant: that which is in it ſelf ſufficient to make a Believer perfect, what can be more requiſite to make up perfection as to us, but the thing that will make us perfect? And the Covenant is ſufficient to make the man of God perfect. 1 Tim. 1. 36. *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and it profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction, in righteouſneſs*: Now, ſince they are ſufficient to make the man of God perfect, the Covenant muſt be a perfect Covenant that is thus uſeful.

Reaſ. 3. It will prove a perfect Covenant, if ye conſider that God in the Covenant is at the outmoſt of his offers; now there can be nothing wanting, if God be at the outmoſt of what he can offer. There are three things that in the Covenant evidences God to be at his outmoſt, ſo to ſpeak with reverence, that he cannot go beyond the three. 1. The bleſſings of the Covenant, he cannot go beyond them, he cannot offer greater things than himſelf & his Son,and both theſe are promiſed in the Covenant. 2*ly*.He is at the outmoſtof the freedom of the terms, on which theſe offers are made, its impoſſible to make an offer on freer terms,that we ſhould accept of him,& turn from our iniquity,&hearken and incline our ear to the Covenant; what eaſier terms was it poſſible for God to make ſuch great offers on. 3*ly*. He is at his outmoſt, as to the Seals and Security of the Covenant, its remarkable, when he confirmed the Covenant to *Abraham*, *Heb.* 6. Becauſe he had no greater to ſwear by, he ſwore by himſelf, that imports, that he gave the greateſt Oath he could make, if he could have ſworn by a greater, he would have ſworn by it;ſo he is at his outmoſt,as to all theſe three. Muſt not then this be a perfect Covenant, where God is at his outmoſt

moſt, and where (to ſpeak with reverence) he can neither make greater offers, nor freer offers, nor give greater Security for his offers?

Reaſ. 4. That muſt be a perfect Covenant, which upon the grounds given in the Text, ſatisfies all deſires, and is all the hope of Salvation, this proves it a perfect Covenant; our deſires are very vaſt, they are ordinarily like the Sea, our deſires are like an Ocean, yet all deſires, and even when they ſhall be racked to the full, the things contained in the Covenant ſhall ſatisfie them, and for all eternity, ſo the Covenant cannot but be a perfect Covenant; ſo lay the four together, and ye will ſee a perfect Covenant.

But the more clear handling of this will appear, if I will particularly enquire into what reſpects it is a perfect Covenant: It would take a long time to open this, I will confine my ſelf in handling this, to four or five particulars, and in theſe ſhall let you ſee, in what reſpects its a perfect Covenant. 1. Its a perfect Covenant in regard of excellency; its perfectly excellent, if the things contained in the Covenant, had been many things like the gifts *Abraham* gave to *Keturah* his Concubine, and her Children, it would be far from being a perfect Covenant, ſuppoſe it had been a liferent Bond, or a lifes Tack of health, or a little whiles flouriſhing in the world, what a ſilly thing had it been in the point of excellency? But the Covenant is perfect in this reſpect, the greateſt things God can give, are contained in it, he will give grace and glory, and no good thing ſhall be wanting to them that live uprightly, no, he cannot offer greater things, he offers in the Covenant all that he hath, and to make us Ruler over all that he hath, *Bleſſed ſhall that ſervant be, whom his Lord when he cometh finds ſo doing, verily he will make him ruler over all that he hath.* 2*ly*. Its a perfect Covenant, in regard it holds out not only all theſe excellencies, but its a Covenant of the moſt excellent things in their perfection, in as far as they are communicable: Divines diſtinguiſh two ſorts of Attributes of God, ſome communicable, ſome incommunicable, infinitneſs is incommunicable; Eternity is incommunicable; other Attributes of God are communicable, his Wiſdom, his Holineſs, his Juſtice, his Goodneſs. All the Attributes of God

God communicable are made over to us in the Covenant; he promiſeth they ſhall be forth-coming to us: and there are ſome Rays communicat to Believers, like Beams proceeding from the Sun, they come from God the Fountain of Wiſdom and Holineſs, all the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, in ſo far as it is communicable, and as we ſtand in need of, is made over in the Covenant; there is nothing in the Father or in the Son, that is communicable, but its made over in the Covenant; ſince it is ſo, that the moſt excellent things are promiſed in the Covenant, and all the excellencies of the Father, and of the Son, in ſo far as they are communicable, and we are capable of, are made over in the Covenant, it muſt then be a perfect Covenant in regard of excellency: What is poſſible for you to imagine? What is deſirable? What is the Father and his Son, and all that is in him, in ſo far as we are capable of, and are communicable, is made over to us in the Covenant. 3*ly*. Its a perfect Covenant in reſpect of duties; there are two things that make up the whole duty of Man, or of a Chriſtian, and ye will find there was never any thing ſo perfect in both regards, as the Covenant is, 1. The Covenant is perfect in regard of Mortification. 2*ly*. In regard of Vivification. *Firſt*. Its perfect in regard of Mortification, the Heathens, and all Hypocrites know nothing of this myſtery of the Covenant, the Covenant is perfect in regard of Mortification; if ye view three things required in the work of Mortification, ye will find them all called for in the Covenant. 1. The Covenant requires, that we ſhould not only mortifie outward and ſcandalous luſts, but alſo inward and heart luſts; the Covenant calls for both the two, all the Law-givers that ever gave Laws to the world, their Laws ſtrike not at heart-ills, but the Covenant is thus perfect, as the luſts of the heart, the luſt of the eye, eyes full of Adultery, even that the Covenant condemns, and makes Adultery; and ſo its perfect in regard, it not only ſneds off the Branches, but it ſtrikes at the Root even of heart-luſts. 2*ly*. The Covenant it preſſes the Mortification of leſſer things, even the things that we would think but a ſmall evil, the Covenant preſſes that we ſhould watch againſt every iniquity, and count nothing ſmall that is committed againſt a great God, 3*ly*. The Covenan

nant not only preſſes the Mortification of heart-ills, and the leaſt ills, but it preſſes the Mortification of the moſt dear things, and things moſt precious to us, ſuch as the right hand, the right eye, Mat. 5. 29. *If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, &c. better to go to Heaven with one eye, than go to Hell with two*; So argues Chriſt, the ſmalleſt ſin, the leaſt appearance of ſin, and the deareſt of things, though it were as dear as the right eye, and the right hand, they muſt be mortified, and muſt not that be a perfect Covenant, that gives ſo perfect Laws?

Secondly, Take a view of Vivification, and of poſitive duties ſupperadded to the work of Mortification, and ye will find it perfect in regard of theſe, eſpecially, if ye notice three things. 1. The Covenant preſſes univerſal obedience to the Law, not only the firſt Table of the Law, but the ſecond, not only duties to God, but to our Neighbour; the Covenant preſſes a believing of all that God ſays, *God ſpake all theſe words, ſaying*, is the Preface to the Ten Commandments, they are all the Words of God, if one of them had been ſpoken by the god of *Ammon*, if a ſecond had been ſpoken by the God of *Iſrael*, we might have ſaid, this was ſpoken by the god of *Ammon*, and is not to be obeyed; but all the Commands are the Words of God, and therefore all are to be obeyed. 2*ly*. The Covenant in the point of Vivification, declares againſt ſlothfulneſs as well as ſcandals, the Covenant ſays, the Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, or the careleſs or barren Tree, will be caſt into the fire, as well as the Tree that brings forth Acorns, and that is an evidence of the perfection of the Covenant; its well obſerved of *Jonah*, a ſleeping; *Jonah* may ruine a Ship, as well as a Pirat, had there come an Enemy, or a Pirat upon the Ship that *Jonah* ſlept in, it could not contribute more to ruine it, than his ſleeping; ſecurity, and ſlothfulneſs will bring thee to Hell, as well as the groſſeſt ſcandals, 3*ly*. The Covenant calls for Grace as well as duty; there is nothing acceptable duty to God, but what hath grace at the bottom of it, if we give our body to the fire, and want charity, if we pray never ſo much, and pray not in faith, it is not acceptable; there is no right work of Sanctification, except the work conſiſts of Grace as well as Duties, muſt not that be a perfect Covenant,

nant, as to all the duties of Mortification and Vivification, that require ſuch exact obedience, as ye ſee required in it? 4*ly*. Its perfect, in reſpect, its a compleat anſwer to all our neceſſities; there is nothing one neceſſity can call for, but its contained in the Covenant, the truth of this will appear, if ye take notice of two things. 1. There is no want a Believer can be lyable to, but readily ye will get two Promiſes in the Covenant relating to it; ſome have taken the pains to caſt them up, and in their Treatiſes made appear, that there is no want a Chriſtian can come under, but in the Covenant there will be at leaſt two Promiſes for one want, if ye go through particularly; Is it a heart of ſtone ye complain of; Is it an unclean heart? Is it weakneſs of Grace? Is it the ſtrength of corruption? Be what it will, ye ſhall readily find two Promiſes; for what ever want a Chriſtian can come under. 2*ly*. The Covenant holds out Chriſt in all his three Offices, its certain Chriſt being appointed of the Father a Phyſician, a Mediator, a Propitiation, he muſt be ſuited to all our wants; now Chriſt in his fulneſs is holden out in the Covenant; ſo the Covenant in all the Promiſes of it, is nothing but the execution of his threefold Office, as King, Prieſt, and Prophet in the Church; hence I rationally infer, its a perfect Covenant, for if there be a fulneſs in Chriſt, in whom a Believer is compleat, and that fulneſs be communicat and diſpenſed, according to the tenor of the Covenant, then it muſt be a perfect Covenant, for there is no want, there is no ſtrait, there is no caſe that can be perplexing, but at leaſt ye ſhall find two promiſes, if not ſometimes ſix relating to it.

Laſtly, to prove it a perfect Covenant, that muſt be a perfect Covenant, the bleſſings wherof are to be eternal; indeed if they ended, if there were but a Liferent tack of them, ſuppoſe he ſhould give us a Tack of Peace and of Pardon, and all that God hath; ſuppoſe he ſhould have made over all that he hath in the Covenant, and only given us ſeventy years Tack of them, as he hath given us of our life, and the date of our time, though it had been perfect in excellency, yet it had not been perfect in duration, but this makes it perfect in all things, and well ordered, that as the excellency of it ſtands in this, that all that is in God, and all the Righteouſneſs of

Son is made over to us; so it is to endure to all eternity. Now lay these four together, ye will see that the Truth of this is unquestionable, that among many excellent Characters and properties of the Covenant, this is a special one, that it is perfect.

Before I apply this Doctrine, there are three Objections, one of them made by *Quakers*, another by *Papists*, and a third by *Episcopal men*, and Patrons of Ceremonies; and all the three I will remove.

Object. 1. First, it may be Objected, this Covenant is not perfect, why? There are many things revealed by a voice within us (say the *Quakers*) not contained in the Scriptures; that cannot be a perfect Covenant, that contains not all things necessar for Salvation, and this Covenant contains not all things necessar for Salvation; why? The Spirit reveals this and that to me, when there is no nearness to him, and this is necessar, and therefore the Covenant cannot be perfect; and indeed *Quakers*, who are multiplying, and against whom Ministers should give warning, they are twining up their Disputes to this head, for if they gain this, that the Spirit reveals new Truths, not contained in the Bible, they gain all their desire; what ever is born in a man, they call it the work of the Spirit, now what can be replyed to this?

Ans. For Answer to this, and to guard against this Doctrine of theirs, ye would take notice of three or four things about it. 1. The proper work of the Spirit of Truth, is not to reveal new Truths, but to open the eyes to the Truths already revealed; When the Spirit, the Comforter, comes, he will guide you in all Truth, and bring all things to your remembrance, the work of the Spirit of Truth is to bring all things already revealed to our remembrance; *The Spirit when he comes, he shall take of mine, and shew it you*, John 14. 16. That is, He shall take my Covenant, and my Righteousness, and shall shew it to you: so the work of the Spirit of Truth is, to bring things to our remembrance, that Christ hath already revealed, when they are put to it: they cannot in all the Bible shew the least Promise, that the Spirit will reveal new Truths, but will bring things already revealed to our remembrance. 2*ly*. Take notice, that this Principle contains one of the greatest reflections on the Scriptures, if

if there were no more to make it odious to you than this it is enough, for it says, the word of God is not perfect; the Spirit says, it is perfect, and closes the Bible with it. *If any shall add to the prophesies of this Book, God shall add to him all the plagues contained in this Book*; if there were no more to make it abominat, and odious, by all sober Christians, this reflection that it contains, on the perfect Rule of manners, the Scriptures and Covenant of God, it is enough: and who will maintain a necessity of Revelation of new Truths, must maintain, that the things already revealed were not perfect, and consequently reflect on God, who hath given man a Rule, but not a perpect Rule. 3*ly*. The evil of this will appear, in regard it were the way to destroy, and turn not only mankind, but the Church of God into confusion; by what Rule shall one discern the thing born in upon us, to be from the Spirit? They say, they are to judge the Spirit by the thing born in upon us & not to judge the thing born in on us by the Spirit; Therefore in *Germany*, it was so born in on a man, to that height, as to kill his own Wife, and on another, to blaspheme God, and on another to commit Incest, and shall we judge such blasphemies against God and such horrid Acts of Murder and Incest, when born in on a person, to be from the Spirit? That would destroy both the Church of God, and all humane Society. And *Lastly*, it fathers on the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, all the horrid Inventions, and Imaginations of mans own heart, what a dreadful thing is this, that the corrupt heart invents and imagines, and then fathers it on the Spirit of God, and speaks lyes in his Name? So if there were no more, to make you tremble at this Principle of *Quakers*, and make you to believe the Covenant, a perfect covenant, its more than enough. Now for all this Principle of *Quakers*, and the Objections they make, the covenant is perfect, and all things to be believed, and to be done, are contained in it; and they that will say, the Spirit reveals new Objective Truths, by the Spirit within them, they are putting themselves to horrid Temptations.

Object. 2. The second Objection is moved by *Papists*, who say there are unwritten Traditions as necessar for salvation, as any thing contained in this covenant; the Council of *Trent*, say they, appointed them to be received

pari pietatis affectu, that the Scriptures are to be received; and here is one of the great grounds why the Christian Church is so tossed with Divisions and Questions, about things they confess are not in the Scriptures, but are contained in a Rule as certain as the Scriptures, and makes not this against the perfection of the Covenant? Its not perfect, say they, in regard the generality of Christians, and all *Papists*, they take themselves to unwritten Traditions. I need not dwell on this, I trust there is not much need of crying down these Traditions in this place, in regard, I am perswaded, the most part believe the perfection of the Scriptures, & of the Covenant.

Ans. I will only say these three things of these Traditions. 1. Take notice, that the most part of the things they offer for Traditions, as necessar for salvation, if ye would but examine the grounds on which they are taken up, ye would admire, that men of such parts, go upon such shallow ground; They say their Traditions must come from Apostles, why? Because we cannot tell when they came into the Church, such as the Office of *Cardinals*, &c. As if a man cannot tell, there is a Burn running through the Town, that yet cannot tell the spring-head out of which it comes: now, is not this a very shallow ground, these Traditions must be *Apostolick*, because none can tell when they began. 2*ly*. I will say of these Traditions, the most part of them are but vain things, they look not to flow from the Spirit of God; there are many of them vain things, and tend more to prove a *Popish* Interest, than Christian piety; no wonder then, that Christians heart stand at them. 3*ly*. We reject all these Traditions, and there will never be peace untill these Traditions be taken away, and till we come to resolve in the Covenant of God, and the Scriptures, to be the perfect Rule of manners, which are sufficient to make the man of God perfect. So it stands as a firm Truth, that the Covenant is a perfect Covenant.

Object. 3. May it not be said, Are there not many things necessary for Believers in their Faith and Practices, that are not contained in the Scripture? As for example, if there be a Question about Forms of Ecclesiastick Government, that is not determined in the Scriptures.

Ans. To this, I will say two things, 1. It is enough to me fully

juſtly to have averſion from any form of Government, if it be not determinedin the Scriptures; many confeſs this, and yet they own *Prelacy*, they ſay in all the Word of God, God hath left no particular Direction to ſuch and ſuch Officers, but what he hath left to all Miniſters, he hath impoſed no Duty on them, nor hath he told people how to carry to them in all the Bible; is not this a ſufficient reaſon againſt them? Is not this a yielding of the Cauſe? But 2*ly*. The Covenant is perfect, as to this, the Lord hath determined a form of Government, and hath ſet it up even among preaching Miniſters of the Goſpel, giving them the ſame qualifications, without any diſtinction, the Lord hath poſitively determined all things neceſſar for ſuch and ſuch Offices, & herein the Government is perfect, in regard it poſitively determines, what form of Government the Maſter of the houſe would have in his own Houſe.

But ſecondly, are there not many things relating to worſhip, that are not determined in the Scriptures? Such as Forms, Geſtures and Garbs, and ſuch like, and are theſe determined in the Scriptures? For *Anſwer*, If they be not determined in the Scriptures, they ſhould not be practiſed, and this is a ſufficient Argument: its ordinarily the Whore that buſks her ſelf, let the Whore, or the *Romiſh* Church wear a buſkin all hanging with Ribbens, but let not the true Church wear that Garb; for the Bride ſhe is ay comlieſt in her native purity; and really Gods Ordinances have another manner of Grace, in their naked purity, we need not ſet Forms in our Worſhip, all theſe things are determined in general Rules in the Scripture, *Let all things be done decently, and in order*, let all things be done without ſtrife, and let them be done in charity. To be brief, there is nothing in time and eternity, but it is contained in the covenant, and ſo it muſt be a perfect covenant.

SERMON XXXVI.

2 Samuel. 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure, for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

PErfection is a comprehenſive Property of the covenant, I can ſay no more of it than I have ſaid, Per-

fection is a thing, to which nothing can be added, and to which nothing is wanting; I laboured to convince you of this.

The practical part of the Point remains to be handled, Is the Covenant a perfect Covenant? There are three or four practical Uses of it I will follow; I confess there is hardly any thing in Time, that we can ascribe the name of Perfection unto; the most excellent of persons have some defects, there is something wanting in them, there is something in their humour, and in their way, that says, they are not perfect, the most excellent of things are so, the Rose will fade, and it hath a Brier in it, but the Covenant is perfect.

Use 1. It serves then to reprove these, who take it not up as perfect; and there are three or four sorts of persons, that come under this Reproof. 1. It reproves Quakers, that tell us of new Truths, that will be revealed to one man, and not to another, they reflect on the Scriptures, they say the Covenant is not perfect, they blaspheme God, and destroy humane Societies; they make no Church certain till their Revelation come; all that hath been done by Christ, may be overturned by a new Revelation; ye ought to be guarded against this principle, they will be lying among you, and ye not know them, this is their great Principle, and that which now in their Books, they are hotest in following, guard against it, as ye would have God's peace, and hold by this, that the Covenant is perfect, it contains all your Salvation, and all your desire. 2*ly*, It reproves Papists, the bulk of whose Religion lies in humane inventions and Traditions; Mr. *Baxter* observes well, it is a ground to suspect them enemies to the Scriptures. for they will not admit the Scriptures to be the Judge of Controversies; its even like a man declining a Judge, because he suspects him; but we maintain this Covenant to be a perfect Covenant, it contains all our Salvation, and all our desire; and we bid no more for the mind of God than what is contained in it; and until we see him, we will take these Letters of his, and trust them, and walk by them, and expect from him according to what is contained in this perfect Covenant. 3*ly*, It reproves these among us, who will have the Covenant perfect, as to all things relating to Faith, but they will

will not have it a perfect Rule of Manners, they say, for Ceremonies and Forms of Government, we are not to seek them from Scripture, and a Covenant, and where should we seek them, if we seek them not there? And what has any thing to do in his house, that hath not his Warrand, if there be not determinations in the word about them, and if they cannot pretend to Christ's Commission, what warrand have they to his house? O! they cut the throat of their own Conscience, while they deny this. 4*ly*. It reproves many practical Christians, who do not take the Covenant for a perfect Covenant. Frequently it comes to be the case of a Christian, to doubt & question, and sit down (like a Woman in Travail, thinking she will never be delivered) seeking after some Sense and Experience, unless God communicate something that will tickle their affection, they cannot take the Covenant, nor a Promise of the Covenant: Thou dost not believe the Covenant to be a perfect Covenant; readily thou speaks of it, as if it wanted out thy case; thou will say, it contains many things, but alas it wants out my case, thou understands not the nature of it, for its a perfect Covenant, its all thy Salvation, and all thy desire, and there is nothing wanting in it, that he that was wiser than thou, thought necessar to be put in it. All these comes under this reproof, and however thou joyns with Papists and Quakers, and all the Patrons of Ceremonies, in an hour of temptation, when thou takes not the Covenant for a perfect Covenat, yet it is a perfect Covenant.

Use 2. The 2*d*. use of the Point, Is the Covenant so perfect a Covenant, it contains what God can promise, and all that we can desire? Then it serves for information, and there are 4 or 5 things it informs of, & that a Christian should seriously ponder. 1. Is it a perfect Covenant? It informs of the obligation we have to him that made it, and to the Mediator that treated it, there is nothing can be added to it. O! but he mannaged the business well, and there is nothing wanting in it, for its a perfect Covenant, there is hardly a man hath a business, but he will find some faule. I like well the observation a Moralist hath, says he, there are many, they are like witches, in finding out faults, whereas Wit lies rather in covering faults; its the greatest Wit, that can best defend a bad cause, ordinarly, there is no man can go through the world, but there

there are ay ſome ſaying, ſee the fool, but what fault can ye find in the management of this Covenant, for its perfect? I appeal in cold blood to any Chriſtian, is there any thing can be added, or wanting in it? He that managed it, was Chriſt the Wiſdom of God, and the Power of God, that carried the buſineſs ſo, as the moſt cenſorious Wit can neither add, nor find a want in it, ſome tell of one a Critick, in the whole courſe of his Life, he could ſcarcely find one action that pleaſed him; whatever any did, he found ay a fault in it, but bring out this Covenant, and give him the Spectacles of a Chriſtian, and he will find it a perfect Covenant, he would not find in it the leaſt fault or want; nor is there any thing to be added to it, which proclaims the wiſdom of the Mediator; our buſineſs was better in his hand, than if it had been in ours; for if we had had the managing of it, either there would be ſome thing added or wanting; but he managed it ſo, as there is nothing can be added or wanting. 2*ly*, Is it thus a perfect Covenant, then not only bleſs the Mediator, but make uſe of it, improve it as a perfect Covenant; there is indeed the great uſe of the Point I would dwell a little on, and help you to improve it as a perfect Covenant; there are four Caſes wherein we are to improve it as a perfect Covenant. 1. I exhort you to improve it in all Debates, this is a time full of Debates, ye ſhall find hardly two meet in one Judgement in all things: Here is Chriſt, ſays one; there is Chriſt, ſays another: There is one thing cryed up this year, another thing cryed up the next year; but the Covenant is a perfect Covenant; bring all your debates to the Scriptures, and to the Covenant, do not ſtand on the Judgement of Ranters, and profane wicked men, that readily will not turn over a Chapter of the Bible in a week, its impoſſible for them to know the word of God, no queſtion they may Rant, and they may alter according to their ſhallow Wits, like men groping in darkneſs, and know not at what they ſtumble, *Iſa.* 8. 20. *To the law, and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them:* In all queſtions of the time that thou art cryſted with in this world, if thou would be a perſon that would look out like a witty one, and a man of underſtanding, be well acquaint with the Scriptures, and underſtand them well; I would not value a man that is unacquainted with the

Scriptures,

Scriptures, more than the barking of a Dog. 2. Improve it in all things that relate to your peace, *Antinomians* and *Socinians* tell us, they can afford peace to the wicked, it is true their principle leads them to that, but we tell them, it will not be a Spiritual peace, it will not be according to the Covenant; Let them ſpeak peace, it is not Chriſt that ſpeaks peace, it is no peace from the inferiour judge, if the Supreme Judge condemn it; what ſignifies peace from all the Miniſters in the world, if the Maſter ſay, *depart from me, I know you not*? And if he ſay, *come to me, little children*, what ſignifies it, if all the Miniſters in the world ſay, *depart from me*? Therefore take up the Covenant, as a perfect Rule in order to your peace; If it ſpeak peace to you, take the peace of it, if it ſpeak war to you, take it, for its a perfect Rule, to which nothing can be added. 3. I exhort Chriſtians to improve it in a third caſe, and that is, to bear off Challenges and temptations; Frequently they come multiplying, take the Covenant, its a perfect Covenant, why go ye about to be diſquieted with it, I think, & I fear, when it may be, neither thy thought, nor thy fear, hath a ſpiritual warrand; take the Covenant, its perfectly the mind of God, and if ye knew how to improve it, readily ye might find, that there is no temptation, nor challenge of what kind ſoever, but ye may find an anſwer to it in the Covenant. I will offer you but theſe three things, that may occur, and they moſt ordinarily meet you. 1. Ye have a natural heart, go to the Covenant with it, its perfect, *I will take away the heart of ſtone*, I like it well to ſee Parents teach their young ones to pray, they put this Promiſe and that in their hand; ye that have a gate of it, put in this promiſe in their hand, *I will take away the heart of ſtone*, teach them in their youth to preſs this promiſe, and bid them go to God, and the Covenant, where they will find this among the firſt Promiſes, *I will take away the heart of ſtone, and I will give you a new heart.* 2. If your caſe be great guiltineſs, what ſhould ye do with it, ſhould ye ſit down and deſpair, and caſt away your hope and confidence, and be waiting for death, as the Meſſenger that will take you to hell; no, go to the Covenant with it, *Iſa.* 1. 18. *Though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be white as ſnow, though they be red as crimſon, they ſhall be as wooll*, Iſa. 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own ſake, and will*

not

not remember thy ſins. But 3. if the challenge were, that ye want Repentance, and cannot get a heart broken for theſe things, ye have committed againſt God, go to the Covenant, and ye will find the Promiſes of Repentance; for as I ſaid, its a perfect Covenant, I defy you to inſtance the caſe ye can be in, but there may be two Promiſes made to it, if not ſix; therefore be improving the Covenant in all your debates and diſputes of the time, in all things that relate to your conſolation, and that relate to your challenges. 4. I exhort you to improve the Covenant in all your duties, make uſe of it as a perfect Covenant, I declare from this place this day, that I take nothing for my duty to God, but what is contained in the Covenant; no man, nor Society of men, can make duties to God, nothing can be a duty to God meerly from the will of men; nay more, its enough to make it a quarrel, if we worſhip him according to the Traditions of men, and no wonder, for it ſays, this Covenant is not perfect; therefore nothing can be a duty to God from men, though they were never ſo perfect or holy, they cannot make duties, but what are contained in the Covenant, and they who will take upon them to ſay, this is a duty, and this is a duty, and the contrair is a ſin, they take Gods Office on them, for its he that makes duties, and its he that hath made them perfectly in this Covenant, and they that can keep up the duties of the Covenant, they will in due time be made perfect in the Covenant.

Uſe 3*d.* The third Uſe of the Point. Is it a perfect Covenant? then its encouraging and comfortable to Believers: O! to be under a perfect Covenant, its very comforting and encouraging, in theſe four or five caſes. 1. Compare your caſe with the caſe of the generality of men, the generality of men, they are ſeeking their contentment in other things than the Covenant, but the things are not perfect; Its obſerved there are three great imperfections in all the Creatures. 1. There is nothing in the Creature compleat, there is neither Perfection nor Thing, even though men ſhould ſay it were perfect in its own kind, yet not in every kind, ſome have ſtrength and they want Wit; ſome have beauty, but they have a wicked ill humour; ſome have riches, and they are baſe; ſome have honour, and they are poor; there is ay ſome brier in their Roſe; ye will find ſeveral Worthies mentioned

oned in the Scripture, who had their own imperfections, *David* he had uprightneſs, but he was not free of ſcandal; *Moſes* had meekneſs, yet he wanted not impatience; *Abraham* had faith, yet he wanted not fear of his life, when he went to *Egypt*, and to *Abimelech*'s court; there was in them a Roſe that bloſſomed, but there was ay a brier beſide it; hardly can it be ſaid of any thing, that ever was, that was ſaid of Chriſt, *Col.* 2. 10. *And ye are compleat in him.* 2. There is an imperfection in the Creature of duration; ſuppoſe it were compleat, yet it cannot laſt, like *Jonah*'s Gourd, it ſhadowed him from the heat of the ſun in the day, but at the evening it withered: A little time puts an end to it, there is no perfection of duration in the Creature, *Pſal.* 73. *My fleſh and my heart faileth, but God is the ſtrength of my heart*, &c. 3. There is an imperfection of ſuitableneſs, ſuppoſe the thing were intirely compleat and laſting, yet our humour and inclination may change, according to our appetite, for ſuppoſe the thing continue compleat and endure, yet our inclination may alter; hardly are there any thing conſtantly enjoyed, but the ordinary uſe of them is enough to give a ſurfeit of them. Now, there is imperfection in the Creature, but in this Covenant there will be no change, the thing is compleat; and ay the more enjoyed, there is the greater appetite and the more longing deſire. Therefore, ye that have an Intereſt in this Covenant, compare your caſe with all others, and ſuppoſe ye cannot count on ſuch Bonds, and ſuch Charters of Lands, yet conſider, that they have but a periſhing good, and ye have an Intereſt in the everlaſting Covenant; be comforted with comparing your caſe with others. 2. I exhort you that have an intereſt in this Covenant, to learn to underſtand your Priviledge; there are may Believers, like a young Heir that cannot read nor write, they underſtand not their Charter; ſo many Believers underſtand not their Priviledge, becauſe their underſtanding is imperfect, they go mourning and complaining of their caſe, while their underſtanding of the Covenant is imperfect.

Queſt. I would move here one practical Queſtion, what courſe a Believer ſhould take, to underſtand the Covenant in its perfection?

Anſwer, I will offer you three Rules, that may prove helpful to you. 1. I would exhort you, ye have variety of

Caſes,

Caſes, whiles ye are full, whiles poor, whiles reproached, whiles deſerted, whiles tempted, go to the Covenant with every caſe, and that will train you, and teach you, the perfection of it, readily ye have ſcarcely the confidence ſometimes to do it; but this was the way of Mr. *Dickſon*, if any thing troubled him, he laboured ay to get a Promiſe, and if he got it, he rejoyced, and in his old age he wrote the Book *Therapeutica Sacra*, the cure of all caſes by the Covenant; and if ye make uſe of the Covenant, ye will find there is no diſcouragement, no affliction, but ye will find a remedy for it in the Covenant. 2. I exhort you to be much in fear, filial fear, *Pſ.* 25.14. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*; the ready way to be acquaint with the Covenant is, to be a Chriſtian much in fear, why does he not ſay, *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that love him*? that *rejoyce in him*? or that *believe in him*? the perſon that is fearing him, is driven to the Covenant. 3. If ye would underſtand your priviledge, and underſtand the Covenant, be more a ſtudent of the Covenant; conſider the grounds ye heard laid down, he hath laid out himſelf out to the outmoſt, he hath never holden in making Promiſes, until he hath made that promiſe, *He will make him ruler over all that he hath*; He hath ay gone on in making one promiſe upon the back of another, until he make over all that he hath, and make the perſon Ruler over all that he hath, and what would ye deſire more? or imagine more? He put in promiſes of Peace, promiſes of Pardon, promiſes of Adoption; and of Effectual Calling, and of taking away the heart of ſtone, and never ſtopped at Promiſes making, till he come to make him Ruler over all that he hath; and if ye were ſtudying this, ye might underſtand your priviledge, and I am perſwaded all the diſquietings ye might come under, flowes from the not underſtanding the Covenant, therefore underſtand your priviledge.

That I may cloſe this Point, I will ſpeak a word to two or three Caſes, 1. It ſpeaks a word to thoſe, that ſeek their contentment in other things than the Covenant; ſome ſeek contentment in their Luſts, ſome in the company of the wicked, ſome in their riches, ſome in their honour; but ye are all ſeeking hot Water under cold

Ice,

Ice, ye will not find it there; *Incline your ear and hear, and I will make a Covenant with you*; *why spend ye your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not*? And I will tell you where ye will find it, there is a well ordered and everlasting Covenant, and that is the only thing that will afford true contentment; ye will find there perfect pleasure, Bread, Milk, Wine, Honey, Gold, ye will find Cities and Kingdoms, and ye will find all these in the Covenant, in the Kernel, and not in the Shell; seek not your contentment in other things, for the thing that may give you content the day, may be your grief the morn, they may be a sting in your Conscience the morn, and like fire in your bosom. Incline your ear and hear, why spend ye your money for that which is not Bread? The Lord hath a quarrel with the people that hear not, as with the people of old, *My people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and hewed out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* 2. It speaks to these that think Believers the greatest Fools and Phanaticks in the world; why? They take them to yon Covenant; ye know not what ye say, its a perfect Covenant, it hath perfect Promises, and made upon the easiest Terms; it hath perfect Seals, the Lord cannot add a greater Seal to it than he hath added: and think ye that Phanaticism? No, all of you that are following the world, and making a Covenant with the East-wind, ye know not what ye are depriving your self of, no, its no Phanaticism, its the solidest, the surest, and the most rational way that ever a man took himself to; take your selves to this Covenant, why? its a perfect Covenant, its impossible to add to it, or to take any thing from it. 3. I mention those that have taken themselves to it, and exhorts you to be encouraged; and here for their encouragement I will only say two things. 1. I exhort you that have taken your selves to it as a perfect Covenant, to which if ye were racking your Wit, ye could add nothing; I exhort you to be encouraged under your imperfect priviledges, ye neither get in the wilderness the meat, the reputation, the strength, the fellowship with God that others get, ye could bear the better with all other things if he made it up: whatever imperfection be in the priviledge

ledge, ye have a perfect Covenant, therefore go through the World as the young Heir not yet come to his Inheritance, and that hath not much to ſpend, yet he hath an excellent Charter, and excellent Bonds: So whatever imperfection be in your priviledge, ye have a perfect Covenant, be exhorted to rejoyce upon the account of the Covenant; its a wonder to ſee *David* ſpend the hundred and nineteenth Pſalm and never a word of Chriſt in it all, except in one Verſe, but in every verſe he mentions the Law, and Covenant of God; *I will riſe at midnight and praiſe thee, becauſe of thy goodneſs: I will ſing of thy loving kindneſs*, therefore rejoyce in the Covenant, for it is perfect; and any that makes their Religion ly in complaints, all that ye ſay to God is complaints, and all that ye ſay to your neighbours is complaints; take a rebuke in the Name of God, for whatever ground of complaints ye have, ye ought to rejoyce in the Covenant, for it is perfect, and there is nothing can be added to it; or taken from it. 2. I would have you who have the marks I have often given you, of an intereſt in the Covenant, to bring forth the Covenant, and not only make it a ſong to God, but offer it to your Conſciences, when your challenges grow; if we were laying ſtreſs upon the Covenant, and taking it up as a perfect Covenant, we might have a better life of it than we have, but ignorance of the Covenant makes that the half of his allowance is not enjoyed.

SERMON XXXVII.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

HAving ſpoken to the nature and properties of this Covenant, and reſolving not to dwell much longer on this Text, I come to the latter thing that I ſuppoſe is to be handled in it, there are two Objections that might be made againſt *Davids* conſolation from the Covenant, one taken from his own guilt, and the guilt of his houſe, *although my houſe be not ſo with God*, another taken from

from Gods Providence & his Diſpenſations to him, *although he make it not to grow*: ſo we ſhal handle the beginning and the cloſe of the Verſe together, as beſt agreeing to the method that I propoſed, and did caſt the words into.

The firſt Objection I will begin this day, which is the ſmell of his guilt, and the guilt of his houſe, *although my houſe be not ſo with God*, &c. Its made a great Queſtion, and there are diverſe opinions about what is meant by *Davids* houſe, whether it take in the ſtate of the Kingdom and Church, as ſometimes it doth in Scripture, or whether it be his particular Family, in which there was abounding Inceſt, Murther, and Adultery, and many other things; or whether it be the houſe of his body, and the tabernacle of his body, his perſon where there were many failings; likewiſe the meaning of the phraſe, *Although my houſe be not ſo with God*, though it be not legally qualified, and be not ſo with God, as either God or I would have it; for there muſt be ſome ſuch thing here, *yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant*; ſo that before I can come to ſpeak of his houſe and the failings conſiſting with the Covenant, and of the anſwering their failings in the Covenant; there is one thing I cannot paſs, and will handle it this day, its this, comparing the Objection and the Priviledge together, my houſe is ſinful, its not ſo with God, yet notwithſtanding it be ſo, he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant.

Doctrine. The Obſervation ſhal be, *That the Covenant made with Believers, its a Covenant of Grace*; its abſolutely of Grace, the Lord makes the Covenant with them, although their houſe be not ſo with God, yet the Covenant is made with them, and this intirely proves it a Covenant of Grace. I will in the work of this day, comparing the Covenant with *Davids* houſe, handle this to you, that its a Covenant of Grace, its an abſolutely free and gracious Covenant; its a remarkable confirmation of this you have, *Ezek.* 36. 32. The Lord hath in the former Verſes, ſet down many Promiſes in the Covenant, ſuch as, *I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, a new heart will I give you, and I will put a new ſpirit within you, I will take away the ſtony heart, I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and write my Laws in your heart*; and Verſe 32. *Not for your ſakes do I this, ſaith the Lord God, be it known unto you, be aſhamed and confounded for your own way, O houſe of Iſrael.*

Many

Many precious promiſes hath he made in the Covenant, yet for the riſe of them, be it known unto you, ſaith the Lord God not for your ſakes do I this: That I may follow this a little, I confeſs its the great thing of our Soul, if we were this day going to the grave, that he ſhould make a Covenant with you, whoſe houſe is not ſo with God.

I will firſt prove the Covenant made with *David* and his ſeed, to be abſolutely and intirely a Covenant of Grace. 2. I will inquire into the reaſons, why God will have this Covenant of Grace. 3. I will clear a Queſtion or two about it, and laſtly ſhal apply it.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt to prove it a Covenant of Grace, that is a Covenant of free favour, that's made with them, whoſe houſe is not ſo with God, its a pathetick expreſſion, there is much more implyed than is expreſt, That the Covenant is a Covenant of meer grace and free favour, will appear from theſe three remarkable Truths: 1. We have no acceſſion in procuring it. 2. The grounds and motives of it are only in God. 3. It hath all the properties of Grace and favour in it that could be expected, to prove it a Covenant of Grace. 1. it proves it a Covenant of free grace, abſolutely of free favour, in regard we are altogether ſecluded from having any hand in procuring it: Its obſerved in Diſpute with Papiſts, there are four ways by which we might be conceived to influence a thing from God, and all theſe we are ſecluded from, 1. By way of merit. 2. By way of price. 3. By way of ſervice. 4. If there were ſuitableneſs in us to it: ſeveral times there is beauty and comlineſs, where there is neither merit nor price, nor ſervice, that will be alluring and procuring, but all the four ways are ſecluded from having any hand in it.

Firſt, There is no merit: there are two things neceſſary to make up merit: 1. The thing we give muſt be our own. 2. It muſt be proportioned to the thing we receive; the Schoolmen cry down merit on theſe two grounds; in ſtrict Juſtice, the thing we merit muſt be of ſomething of our own, we muſt have a proportion of the thing to what we receive, and there is nothing of this in us in ſtrict Juſtice. *Adam* could not merit any thing that could have the name of merit, it did reſult from the Covenant, and not from his obedience, for it was neither

neither his own, nor proportioned to what he was to receive, there could not be a proper commutative Juſtice betwixt God and *Adam*, even though he had kept the Covenant of works, far leſs could we merit, lapſed man could not merit under the Covenant of Grace. 2. As we could give no merit, we could give no price; the reaſon of this is, the outmoſt we could do was, Sacrifices and offerings, all the Heathens could never go beyond this, when they ſet their wits a work to pleaſe their gods, they took the beſt things they had, to caſt into the fire to their gods; but what are Sacrifices and Offerings to him? *Pſal.* 50. 10. *For every beaſt of the forreſt is mine, and the cattel upon a thouſand hills.* Pſal. 51. 16. *For thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give it thee, thou delighteſt not in burnt offerings.* Pſal. 16. 2. *My goodneſs extendeth not unto thee.* Micah 6. 7. *Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?* What would all this ſignifie as a price to him? 3. As we cannot merit, nor give a price, ſo there is no ſervice we can do; there are ſervants that cannot buy nor merit, yet there are ſome pieces of ſervice, by which they may bring an Obligation upon their Maſter; but there is no ſervice we can do, that can bring an Obligation upon him, *Iſaiah* 64. 6. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags.* Luke 17. 10. *So likewiſe ye, when ye have done all thoſe things which are commandeded you, ſay we are unprofitable ſervants,* we have done that which was our duty to do. Laſtly, ſuppoſe we have none of theſe three, we might influence a thing from God by beauty and comlineſs, and ſuitableneſs to his inclination; but neither can this be: Read the ſixteenth of *Ezekiel*, and ye will find what he found in *Iſrael*, when he firſt entred in Covenant with her, *Thou waſt caſt out in the open field, to the loathing of thy perſon, in the day that thou waſt born,* he compares *Iſrael* to a Child new born; as for thy nativity, *in the day that thou waſt born, thy Navel was not cut, neither waſt thou waſhed with water to ſupple thee; thou waſt not ſalted at all, nor ſwadled at all,* &c. Now, *when I paſſed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold thy time was the time of love, and I ſpread my skirts over thee, and covered thy nakedneſs*: ſo the Covenant of Grace running on this ſtrain, we muſt be altogether free from having any ac-

ceſſion to it, there is none of us, but we may ſay, although my houſe be not ſo with God, when he enters in Covenant with us,

For further clearing of this, it will appear in theſe three or four particulars. 1. Take a view of the perſons he takes in Covenant with him, when firſt he meets with them, they are ſometimes ſimpler than others, and ſometimes baſer than others, its not many wiſe, not many Noble, but God hath choſen the foolish things to confound the wiſe; ſeveral times when he begins firſt to take them into Covenant, they are in regard of outward priviledges, inferior to others, was not *Eſau Jacobs* Brother? and the elder Brother, they had the ſame Father and the ſame Mother, and any thing that might be a difference, *Eſau* had it, yet *Jacob* have I loved, and *Eſau* have I hated; the perſons he takes in Covenant, evidence it to be a Covenant of Grace and free favour; ſometime they are the ſimpleſt, ſometime the loweſt, ſometime among the groſſeſt of ſinners; what was *Paul*? what was *Mary Magdalen*? 2. It evidences the Covenant to be of meer Grace in regard of us, in that the Lord keeps different ways with them he takes in Covenant, after he takes them in, and yet he does them no wrong, there are ſome he will call at the third hour, ſome at the ſixth hour, ſome at the tenth, ſome at the eleventh, he will give as much to them he calls at the tenth Hour, as to them he calls at the third, he will give as much Glory, and as much honour, and when he hath done that, he can tell, Friend, I have done thee no wrong, I may do with my own what I will; there may be one called in at the gates of Death, that may have as much, nay a greater gale of ſweetneſs, than the old ſtanding Chriſtians ever had; its remarkable, the good Thief on the Croſs, never man exceeded him in a gale of ſweetneſs, yet he ſcarce had it one hour, he had it out of Chriſts own mouth, this night thou ſhalt be with me in Paradiſe, ſcarce any exceeded him in a fluſh of love, he tells the ill Thief, we are juſtly here, ſays he, but this man what hath he done? and yet he came in at the eleventh hour. So it evidences its of Grace abſolutely, in regard he will call what perſon he will in, and diſpenſe to them as he pleaſes when they come in, tho they come in at the eleventh hour, yet he will

will give them possibly a Feast, that they that come in at the third hour get not. 3. It evidences it in regard of us to be of Grace, in that the dispensations of the Covenant, they are not only communicat to what person, and in what measure he pleases, but in the third place, their Dispensations are limited by no Law, either as to time or place, or Duration, or continuance under the Covenant of Grace; we cannot tell when we will have communion with God, nor how long we will keep it; it will sometimes come before we be aware, and it will go before we be aware, the design of it is to prove, that the dispensations of the Covenant of Grace, depends on the will and good Pleasure of him that gave them, so take a Believer at his fullest, the Covenant in the enjoyment of it, is proven to be of Grace, in regard the thing given, we can have no hand in it, and it goes and readily he is no sinful cause of it; so these are clear evidences, that the Covenant is of meer Grace. This is the first ground on which I go, to prove the Covenant to be of Grace.

The second is that on God's part, all he does, proves it to be of Grace, might he not have said, that which is filthy, let it be filthy still, that which is dying, let it die, after man had fallen, but he took another way.

The Grounds on which the Covenant stands, and the foundations Divines make, are three, and all the three are to be found in him; the first is, his Love; the second is, his Christ; the third, his Mercy; these three are the foundations on which the Covenant stands, and they all prove it to be of free Grace. 1. There is his Love, its so much the sweeter, that Love is at the bottom of it, if the Father give a Jewel to his Son, but if he give it with a frown, or a token of anger, it would not be so much, as if he had given him a farthing, with all the Testimonies of his Heart-love; but here we have a Jewel, and we have it with no frown; its remarkable, *Deut. 7. 7. The Lord did not set his love on you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people*, verse 8. *But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn to your fathers*: Now, heard you ever such a because as this? I have loved you, because I have loved you. What Logick would this appear to *Aristotle*? would

they not call it an Identick? but this holds well in the point of the Covenant, I have loved you, becauſe I have loved you; ſo that there is the firſt riſe of the Covenant, its Love, and if ye ſay, what was the riſe of that Love? was it Beauty? was it Service? Merit? or Price? ne, it was Love, I have loved you, becauſe I have loved you. 2. The great foundation of the Covenant is his Chriſt; therefore the Covenant is called, the ſure mercies of *David*, now *David* was dead long before *Iſaiah*'s time; *It ſhall come to paſs, ſays he, in the latter days, that* David *my ſervant ſhall be their King*, *David* was dead, but there were two *Davids*, and like the ſecond Temple, the glory of the latter Temple, was greater than the firſt; now the ſure mercies of *David*, are the ſure mercies of the Covenant, which are called ſo, becauſe they are founded on Chriſt, whoſe Type *David* was, and he a Branch ſprung out of the root of *Jeſſe*. 3. The Covenant is founded on his Mercy, that ye may diſtinguiſh from his Love, mercy ſuppoſes miſery; the proper object of mercy is miſery: we may rather call the ground of the Covenant Pity, *I had pity on them for my own names ſake*, its not love that inclines ſome to be favourable to them that are in miſery, but pity, the ſame was the root of the Covenant, he ſaw many to be created and born, and he knew they would eternally ruine, and out of pity he entred into this Covenant.

For further clearing and confirming of this point, that the Covenant is abſolutely of Grace and free Favour, I would have you take a view of the bleſſings of the Covenant, 2. Of the conditions of the Covenant, & thirdly of the end and deſign of the Covenant; and all theſe three will evidence it, to be a Covenant of free Grace, 1. Take a view of the Bleſſings of the Covenant, if ye will but view them in their greatneſs, that God ſhould be our God, that Chriſt ſhould be our Mediator, that we ſhould have Pardon, Peace, Fellowſhip, and Heaven, readily we could neither merit, nor give Price, nor Service, but ſome trivial thing in time, but what could we do for Heaven? if there were no more to make Popery odious, that is enough, that they plead for merit, they that will plead for Juſtification by works; there ſeems to be ſome Magick in them. 2. If ye view the Conditions or Terms, on

which

which they are made, its impoſſible that there could be an Offer made, but upon ſome terms, unleſs God would bring all to glory, both the reprobate and profane, and the Godly, he behoved to make ſome terms, and it was impoſſible for him to make them lower, than to accept of, believe in, and imbrace the Son. 3. If ye view the end of the Covenant, which is the exalting of the glory of his Grace; ſince the beginning of the World, he hath exalted his power in his Government of the World, and in the end, he will exalt his Juſtice; but here in making this Covenant, he hath exalted his Grace: ſo ye ſee this Covenant clear, that it is meerly of Grace.

Before I clear any Objection againſt it, I would inquire into the Reaſons, why the Lord would have this Covenant, abſolutely of Grace and free Favour; many reaſons are brought by them that treat of the Covenant, but I will pitch on three or four. 1. The Lord would have it a Covenant of meer Grace, that it might be ſure; it could ſtand on no Foundation without tottering, but on his Grace, *therefore it is of faith*, Rom. 4. 16. *That it might be by grace, to the end the promiſe might be ſure to all the ſeed*; that which makes the Covenant ſure is, that it ſtands on Gods Grace; the Covenant of works ſtood on *Adam*'s free will, its true, he had an excellent qualified will, and abundance of power, and concreated Grace too, in as great a meaſure as he was capable of, yet when it ſtood on *Adams* inherent grace, it could not be ſure, but now it ſtands on Gods grace, ſo that Gods grace muſt fail, before the Covenant fail, why? he hath made it ſtand on the foundation of Chriſt, and ſo long as Grace endures, the Covenant endures. 2. As he hath made it ſure to them that do not deſerve it, ſo he hath made it a Covenant of Grace, that he might make all the refuſers of it inexcuſable, *If I had not come and ſpoken to them, they had not had ſin, but now they have no cloke for their ſin*; he might have come and ſpoken the Covenant of Works, and that readily would not have taken away all excuſes from them, but Chriſt came and ſpoke the Covenant of Grace, and if he came and ſpoke it, what cloke can be invented for ſin, and rejecting of Chriſt in the Covenant? ye are told, he will forgive all bygones, if ye be but willing, and though ye have a mixture of unwillingneſs, yet if ye

come

come with that unwillingneſs, and accept of his Offer, he will forgive; does not this take away all excuſes? what excuſe can the ſinner have, and imagine to have at the great day, when a Covenant of grace is offered to him, and yet he rejects it? 3. Its of grace, to keep the godly humble, it keeps them humble, if ye take a view of three things, that are brought under the Covenant. 1. The time was, when they were like the worſt of Sinners, there is not one piece of clay in the hole of the pit, not one ſtone in the quarie, but they are like other, *Jacob* is like *Eſau* in the hole of the pit. 2. Any thing that hath made the difference betwixt a Believer and a Reprobat, its a thing given, *What haſt thou that thou haſt not received? and if thou haſt received it, why boaſts thou as if thou hadſt not received it?* they are alike in natures, and any difference there is, its but as ye ſaw on a wall, there is one place of the wall dark and on another place there is a Ray of the Sun, that Ray came not from the wall, but from the Sun, and if there be an Interpoſition, it will be as dark as any other place in the Wall, and this contributes to keep them humble. 3. The Lord would have this Covenant to be of grace, that he might exalt his Son, and there is indeed the great reaſon of it, the Father intended to exalt the humane nature of the perſon of the Mediator, that is one deſign, like the Dream *Joſeph* ſaw in the Fields, I dreamed, ſays he, that all your Sheaves fell down, and mine ſtood up; this Dream the Father accompliſhes in the Covenant of grace, he would have yours and mine, and all our ſheaves fall down, and Chriſts ſtand up; the exalting of him is well payed for, he merited it, does he not deſerve it? The exalting of his Son is one great deſign he hath in preſerving and governing of the world, for he hath done him, beſides the Love he had to him, a wonderful piece of ſervice, that it is a wonder to be conſidered; ſo that the Covenant might be ſure, that it might make the Reprobate inexcuſable, for rejecting of him, and make believers humble, and yet exalt Chriſt, its made a Covenant of grace. Laſtly, he would have it a Covenant of grace, that there might run a conſiderable difference betwixt it and the old Covenant of Works; I deny not, but there was Grace in that Covenant, but it was nothing to this; theſe Reaſons do ſufficiently evince, why the Lord would have this Covenant of grace. *Object.*

Object. There is one only Objection I will anſwer, May not ſome ſay, did not our Cautioner purchaſe this Covenant? and in all legal ſenſe, what the Cautioner hath payed, the Principal hath payed, as to all uſes of the Law, the Act of the Cautioner is to be imputed to the principal Debitor, and if the Cautioner hath payed, how can it be a Covenant of grace and free favour.

Anſw. This Objection will be taken away, if ye notice three things. 1. It was grace that made the Father give Chriſt; was ever the like of it heard tell of, a Father loving his Son, and loving him ſo well, and giving him for his enemy? would that derogate any thing from Grace? I like the obſervation of a Divine, he ſays, there are many gracious promiſes in the Covenant, but the Kernel of the grace of them lies, in giving Chriſt; of all the wonderful actsthat ever was heard tell of, the like of this was never heard, that the Father ſhould give Chriſt: its true *Abraham* offered to give his Son *Iſaac*, but *Abraham* was a Servant, and was commanded, and he had done a great ſin, if he had refuſed; beſide, he knew well that God was able to raiſe up an *Iſaac* out of his aſhes; ſo that it was of grace he gave his Son. 2. It was grace, that he accepted his Son; I confeſs the Sacrifice he offered was of infinit value, but the Law provided, that the perſon that ſinned ſhould die, and he was not the perſon that ſinned; its a great wonder, that he accepted from any other, but from the perſon that ſinned. 3. The glorifying the Mediator for the ſatisfaction, was a great act of greace. Remember ye an obſervation I had, the laſt time we had the Communion on that Text, *Come to the wedding, all things are ready*; ye heard the difficult things were put by hand, not only the Decrees of Election, but the ſatisfaction of Chriſt is put by hand, neither could God, nor man, nor Angels ſatisfie for us. 1. God could not ſatisfie, for he was not the perſon that ſinned; Angels could not do it upon the ſame ground; and Man could not give a ſatisfaction of infinit value, how ſhould it be done then? he muſt be both God and Man in one perſon; what a difficult paſs was this? he muſt be God to overcome, and man to die; and ſo ye ſee, that Chriſt hath payed the debt, and purchaſed the Covenant, and this derogats nothing from the Grace of the Covenant, but rather confirms it to be of Grace.

SERMON

SERMON XXXVIII.

2 *Samuel* 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my ſalvation, and all my deſire, although he make it not to grow.

FRom that branch of the Verſe, *Although my houſe be not ſo with God, yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant.* I did infer, That the Covenant made with *David*, was a Covenant of meer grace, altogether independent from any merit, from any Price, or ſervice, or ſuitableneſs in him; without reſuming any thing that I have ſpoken before, I come to the practical part of this, there is one Objection I would clear, and ſhall ſay no more of the doctrinal part.

Object. Doth not the Covenant of grace enjoyn the whole Law, how can it then be called a Covenant of ſuch intire grace? nay more, ye have heard, there are things commanded in it, that are not commanded in the Covenant of Works? how can it then be a Covenant of meer grace and favour?

Anſw. For opening, I deſire ye may notice three or four particulars. 1. Obedience to the Law, is not the principal condition of the Covenant of grace, believing and accepting of Chriſt, is the principal command & condition of it, nay juſtifying Faith; however there be ſome in this generation, would fain put in love in the definition of Faith either deſigning a *Socinian* or *Popiſh* error, they know not, that Faith is the principal condition, and that as juſtifying, though it cannot be ſeparat from Works, they go inſeparably together, yet in its nature and eſſence, it doth not include them. 2. I add, Though the Covenant command the Law, and enjoin it, yet it does not enjoin it as a thing to be performed in our ſtrength, *Adam* was to obey it by the ſtrength of inherent grace, but we are to obey it in the ſtrength of aſſiſting grace; there is a Treaſurer appointed, *Who is made of the Father, our wiſdom, ſanctification, and redemption*, a very neceſſar Truth to be obſerved; ſome when

when they go about duties, they would wring them out of their own hearts, and do them in their own ſtrength, that agrees not to the nature of the Covenant, the way how we are to obey the Law is, to abide in Chriſt, and bring our ſtrength out of him, and the more we depend on him, and the oftner we come to him, we are the welcomer; he readily gives more than we ask, he will do as *Naaman* did with *Gehaſi*, as one obſerves well, *Gehaſi* running after *Naaman*, he asks a Talent of him. *I pray thee*, ſays he, *be content, take two*; we bake beſide Meal, and have a Theſaurer to bear our Purſe, and to defray our expenſe, in every Inns, and in every ſtrait we come to. 3*ly*, Though the Covenant command the Law, yet it will accept of the will for the deed, and ſincerity for perfection, it was not ſo under the Covenant of Works, where it was threatned, *He that offends in the leaſt, is guilty of all*; but in the Covenant of Grace, though we be commanded to be perfect, yet there will be acceptation of uprightneſs for perfection. 4*ly*, Obedience to the Law is indeed commanded, but not to be our Righteouſneſs; it would have been *Adams* Righteouſneſs, had he ſtood under the Covenant of Works, but this cannot be commanded in order to our Juſtification; there is a Righteouſneſs accepted, and that is one of the reaſons, why the Lord in the Covenant of Grace accepts of leſs, than under the Covenant of Works; He firſt conſiders our lapſed eſtate, then he doth with us as a man that hath a great ſum owing him by a Creditor, he gets ſo much from the Cautioner, that he is content to accept of leſs from the Principal; All that God could expect, was from *Adams* ſelf, his Bond admitted not of a Cautioner; but under the Covenant of Grace, there is leſs accepted at our hand, that there is ſo much done by the Cautioner; ſo it does not overturn the Truth of the Covenant, that this Covenant is abſolutely free, and a full Act of free Grace, though there be a commanding of the Law in it.

Without inſiſting more on the Doctrinal part, I will come to the practical uſe of it. 2. Is this Covenant a Covenant of ſo free Grace and Favour, made with thoſe whoſe houſe is not ſo with God? Is it a Covenant thus of meer Grace? The motives and grounds are not derived from us, but from ſome thing in God himſelf, it ſerves for ſeveral practical improvements.

Uſe 1. First, I would exhort you to take heed of making the wrong uſe of it, ſo as to abuſe this Doctrine of free

Grace, two or three ſorts of people come under the abuſe of it. 1. Such as take liberty to ſin, they abuſe it, to take Grace, and make it a prop to ſin, is an abuſe to Grace; *God forbid*, ſays *Paul, that we ſhould ſin, that Grace may abound*; I like the Obſervation a Divine hath, he ſays, there cannot be a greater wrong done to an honeſt ingenuous man, than to ſay, he is an encourager to Drunkenneſs, to Swearing, to Adultery, to Murder, and to Lying, what a reflection muſt it be on Chriſt, to ſay, that his Covenant is not of Grace. 2*ly*, All they that live in any known ſin, and are cheriſhing themſelves with the Doctrine of Grace, they abuſe it; it is a Covenant of Grace indeed, but as ye heard, *It's ordered in all things*; ye cannot plead the conditional Promiſes, before ye make uſe of the abſolute Promiſes. 3*ly*, Such as are pleading for pardon without repentance, they are abuſing this Doctrine of Grace, and there cannot be a greater injury done to Chriſt; He hath meditat and treated this Covenant, and ordered it in all things; it's one of the great fruits of the deep of his Wiſdom, and to go to abuſe it, is a great wrong. 4*ly*, All ye that live careleſs, ignorant, ſecure, and ſcandalous under the Goſpel, and are always pretending to Grace, and a Covenant of Grace, know, that to all your other guilt readily this may be added as the capeſtone that ye turn the Grace of God into wantonneſs, and fall aſleep in your guilt, on this pillow, that this Covenant was free; therefore whatever hath been ſaid of Grace, as free, ſtand by all ye that are living in any known ſin, and glorying in Grace, and makes no uſe of Chriſt for Repentance; whatever encouragement I have in commiſſion to thee, that deſires to feed on the Covenant, it's the Childs Bread; therefore let the former ſtand by; and the latter, take your own allowance.

Uſe 2. Is this Covenant of Grace? It ſerves for Information, and it informs of four or five remarkable things. 1. Of the great condeſcendency of Gods Grace, he had made a Covenant with *Adam*, the perfecteſt meer man that ever was; when God made a Covenant with him, he broke it, in the eſtate of Innocency, it was made with him, was it not a wonder, that ever he ſhould have thought upon any other way with fallen man, when perfect man could not keep it; yet when after that Covenant was broken, and after the Sword, we had failed, He immediatly thinks on another Covenant, & that ſo run in the channel of Grace, it's remarkable, man was lapſed

ſed and fallen, readily any then would have made it ground of contradiction, which he turned up into an Argument of pity; O! the condeſcendency of Grace, O! the height, the depth, the breadth of his love; ye ſhould be admiring his love, and ſometimes ſpeaking of it one to another; that after we had broken one Covenant, he would immediatly think of making another, and that founded on Grace, that it might be ſure, it's of Grace, that it may be ſure.

Will ye be exhorted to be more in the meditation of this Grace, will ye ſpeak often to one another, when ye have occaſion, of the condeſcendency of his Grace; why ſhould all your diſcourſes run, in complaints of miſery and difficulties, and not more in commending this admirable Grace, that manifeſted it ſelf, when we had broken that Covenant, to enter in another and found it on Grace. 2*ly*, Is this Covenant a Covenant of Grace? Then it informs, what is the ground, on which ſtands our enjoying the priviledges of the Covenant: I like well the Obſervation of a Divine, he ſays, it's a neceſſar work for a Chriſtian, to ſit down, and conſider, whence is it, that one hath effectual calling, and another wants it? what is the reaſon I have pardon, and another will never get it? And ſometimes what is the reaſon, that I am not in the lake, and left not to be tormented for ever and ever? Would thou know the reaſon, it's Grace, and meer Grace, how neceſſar is it for us, when we take up the Covenant as a Covenant of Grace, to be conſidering, that all our Mercies privative and poſitive what we are keeped from, and what we enjoy, they come all from Grace? For the Covenant is a Covenant of Grace. Were we ſerious in pondering this, it would put a luſtre on our mercies, the ſmell of Grace would add a great deal of ſweetneſs to them. 2*ly*, It would make us uſe them very humbly, what merey has thou? Grant it be Prayer, or the Spirit of Prayer, thou holds it of Grace, and allenarly of Grace; it's Grace, and Grace only, that hath put the difference betwixt thee and him; it's no wonder, that of all Chriſtians, thoſe Chriſtians be the moſt humble, for when they come to glory, and hath on their Sundays Cloaths, Grace, Grace will be cryed to be the Capeſtone; the *Papiſts* ſays, if we merited not Heaven, we would not be ſo glorious in Heaven; ſays one, to whom is the glory to be given? The diſtinguiſhing grace, preventing Grace, the many privative and poſitive Mercies, will be

the ground of our Song, therefore take up a Catalogue, both of what thou has, and what thou hopes for, and give the glory to Grace. 3*ly*, It informs us upon what warrantable ground we may wait for the Calling, nay for the Glory, even of the moſt wretched; it's true, if our effectual calling were to be merited, if our pardon were to be bought, we might give over all hope; but ſince they come by Grace, the glory is to be aſcribed to Grace; there are three things in this Grace, that may warrantably make the ſoul hope. 1. Grace ſtands upon no bygones, the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt excepted; if thou were never ſo groſs a ſinner, if thou come and accept the offer of Chriſt, as he is held out in this Covenant, he is content to paſs all bygones. 2*ly*, This Grace ſtands not at the weakneſs of Parts, nor the meanneſs of Qualifications; no Babes and Sucklings, and things that are not, Grace will prevent them, and paſs by them. 3*ly*, Grace ſtands not at the weakneſs of Faith, even though it have ſome mixture of corruption, *I believe, help my unbelief* ſaid the poor man; ſo thou may warrantably go to God, and pray for ſuch a friend, that is living, and may be ſees not the danger of his natural State, and thou thinks he is ſo gone, as that he is incureable; thou knows not that thou haſt to do with a good God, who is the foundation of the Covenant of Grace; readily ye will ſay what ground of hope? There is a Covenant of Grace, that is founded neither upon merit, nor price, nor ſervice, but allenarly Gods Grace. Theſe Uſes of Information, and ſeveral others, I will not inſiſt upon.

Uſe 3. Is this Covenant ſo free, and of Grace? then it ſerves for Exhortation; Be exhorted to improve it, as a Covenant of Grace, frequently Believers deal with themſelves, as if they were often under a Covenant of Works, and hence it is their conſolation is no way anſwerable to their allowance, ſeveral times, they are like Children beſide a full breaſt, the Child is lying, and it's lean, and ill like, all the Members of the Body of it are decaying, the reaſon is, not becauſe the Nurſe hath not a full Breaſt, but the Child wants the art of ſucking.

Therefore I will here preſs on Believers theſe two things. 1. I would exhort you to take up this Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace. 2*ly*, I exhort you to improve it as a Covenant of Grace. 1. Take it up as a Covenant of Grace, and that ye may do this, two things I will only recommend unto you,

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1. Consider, God intended absolutely to alter the nature of the first Covenant, when he made the second; in the first Covenant God required perfect obedience, he would not admit of a Cautioner nor of the least failing; were we under the Covenant of Works, there is not the least failing, nor the least idle word, but we might sit down and conclude, it will eternally cast me in hell, for I am under a Covenant that binds me to damnation, for the least failing; but the nature of the Covenant is altered, and if ye would take up the Covenant of Grace aright, labour to understand the difference betwixt the Covenant of Grace, and the Covenant of Works, that thou may not go ay judging thy Case, as if the nature of the Covenant were not changed, but as if thou were under that Covenant which is impossible for thee to obey. 2*ly*, Not only understand the differences betwixt these two Covenants, but examine these four things that I have often mentioned, the principle from which it flows, and that is Love & Grace; the price that was given for it, & that is the Blood of his Son; the great contents of it ye have often heard, that it's impossible for him, (to speak with reverence) to promise greater things than he hath done in the Covenant, he hath promised Himself and his Son; and 4*ly*, Consider the end of it, & that is for the Glory of his Grace, the end of it is that ye may exalt his Grace; and so if ye would take up the Covenant aright, do not only state it in competition with the Covenant of Works, but consider it in these four that are last mentioned. In the second place, I exhort thee to improve it as the Covenant of Grace; I shall first shew you, who are they that do not improve. And 2*ly*, Give some directions how to improve it as a Covenant of Grace. There are three or four sorts of persons, that do not improve it as a Covenant of Grace. 1. However we hold in dispute on this head, preparatory Works, to be in Gods ordinary way antecedent & introductory to conversion, yet we determine not the degrees of preparatory humiliation, no, there is sometimes the Lord opens the heart of a *Lydia*, & we read nothing of his Law Work before; some may reason, my Work is not of effectual calling, why? I had never the legal humiliation that some hath; but what if he let out thy Boyl with a Prin, and take a Sword to others? what if he carry on thy Work of humiliation with thee, in the progress of Sanctification? what if thy Legal Terrours be before thee, that some have

had in the beginning of their work? He is an abſolute Lord, that hath the overſight of this, thou that will ſit & queſtion all thy foundation marks. O! I was not humbled, the preparatory work was not with me as with others; however we maintain preparatory work againſt *Antinomians*, that deny them utterly, they ſay, to what purpoſe are they? We maintain a neceſſity of them, in ſo far as the Lord brings the work of converſion after them, as neceſſarily as the Threed muſt follow the Needle. But *ly*. They do not rightly improve this Covenant, that would make up a hatchpotch betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; readily there are ſome, they would lay ſome ſtreſs on Mercy and Grace, providing they had ſome works to mingle in with their Grace, I formerly hinted at it, it's impoſſible to be under both Covenants, & thou that would make up a hatchpotch of theſe Covenants, in order to thy Juſtification, thou art taking a way to mingle both together, and they will never wall well. 3*ly*, They Rightly improve not this Covenant of Grace, that ordinarily reject the offers, as either being too far above them, or too far below them; ſeveral Believers, when they are called by the Goſpel to come into the Banqueting houſe, they would be at ſome merit or price of their own, before they can treat with Jeſus, about their pardon and their peace, theſe take not up the Covenant as a Covenant of Grace, and are not improving it as ſuch.

Therefore, I will offer four Directions, eſpecially relating to four practical caſes, wherein Believers ought to improve the Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace. 1. When under the ſenſe of unworthineſs; O! ſuch a filly heart as I have, & what can I do with it! Shall I go to God with it? Wilt thou take up the Covenant as a Covenant of Grace? I have ſeveral times adviſed you to do with Chriſt, as the Father did with him, the Father in the Covenant of Redemption, forgave him not one farthing, he payed it to the utmoſt, for he knew he was aboundantly able, therefore he took pleaſure to bruiſe him, therefore he required all that he had promiſed and on the terms promiſed, ſo if he hath bidden thee come, and get the change of an unworthy heart, & told thee, that unworthineſs is an argument of pity, do not ſit down in the Land of Famine as *Jacob's* Children were ready to do in the Land of *Canaan*, even when *Joſeph* had the Command of all the Store in *Egypt* & if

if thou ſhould go down with money in thy hand, to buy victuals, he will ſend thee home, and the money in thy ſacks mouth. 2*ly*, It's an ordinary caſe, when we come under challenges, to ſay, there is no hope for me in God, what will ye ſay of Pardon, hath he not promiſed Pardon? But ſay they, will he pardon the like of me? Will he not pardon the like of thee? He hath pardoned as great ſinners; What made him pardon *David*, *Abraham*, *Manaſſeh*, *Paul*, but Grace? And that ſame Sun that ſhined in their days, ſhines now in our days: and the ſame Grace that was then, is to the fore yet. 3*ly*. Improve it, when thou goes to God with any Petition, though it be ſome great thing, maybe thy heart is broken under the Deſolation of the Church of God, the Grace of the Covenant may be a great encouragement to thee in that caſe, though thou think, O! ſuch an undeſerving thing as I am, and what can Grace do but caſt me off? But thou may go confidently to him, if it be for thy ſelf, if for thy friend in diſtreſs, if for the Church of God; and though thou have no other Argument, thou may preſs the Grace of the Covenant. Laſtly, improve this Grace in the judging of Fundamental Priviledges, & in the building of thy hopes of eternal ones; Firſt, Thy Adoption comes to be a Queſtion, what? Am I adopted to be a Son of God? A poor thing? But what could that hinder the Grace of the Covenant, if Grace thought fit to call thee to that Priviledge? Theſe that are ready to think on ſuch great things, what is in my walk? Shall I enjoy God for all eternity? How can it be expected, that I ſhall enjoy him? But Grace is the great ground of all our hopes; to be brief, learn to take up this Covenant, as a Covenant of Grace, and to deal with himſelf according to it, there are none of you, but in a little while, ye will be at the gates of death, and this will be the great ground of your encouragement.

Uſe 4. The laſt Uſe is of Conſolation. I would from this have Believers encouraged; there are three great encouragements ye have from it. 1. If ye be in Chriſt, his Grace is infinit, all your provocations cannot exhauſt it, if ye be in Chriſt, it's like a man would take a Miln-ſtone, and caſt in the Sea, the Sea will cover the Miln-ſtone, as well as it will do a little pebble ſtone. the greateſt provocations will ſink in this Grace, as well as the ſmall ones; it's true, if thou take occaſion and ſleep ſecure on this cod of Grace, it ſhall be an aggravation

vation of thy former guilt; but if thou be a penitent, this Grace will cover it, though it were great, as if it were small; therefore be encouraged, all that take them to this Grace, in it's due Order, the Grace of it is infinit. 2ly, Ordinarly it's the nature of Grace, the more miserable the Object be, the more Grace is manifested and appears, in that it did Terminat on that Object; the more wretched, the more Grace hath appeared in curing that wretchedness; so that God designs to exalt his Grace in this Covenant, and the more wretched and miserable, the more will Grace appear; Grace hath shined brighter, and hath the more Grace in it, that it did Terminat on the like of *Paul*, *Mary Magdalen*, and *Manasseh*. 3ly, Consider, that one Act of his Grace is a pledge of another, if the Lord hath begun to give thee preventing Grace in thy effectual calling, know the nature of this Covenant, and the Grace of it, it will not stop there, until this Crown glorifie thee; if the Lord hath brought thee under this Covenant of Grace, and if he hath begun to prevent thee and carry on a work of Grace in thee, it will never stop, until it close in perfecting Grace, and have the Crown set upon thy head. Let us bless the Lord, that hath changed one Covenant, and hath given us another, wherein the Greatest Testimonies of Grace that could be given, are manifested; take your selves to it, and labour to improve it, and get an interest in it secured, and ye shall find the comfort of it through all Eternity.

SERMON XXXIX.

2 *Samuel* 23. 5.

Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

I Have dwelt the most part of this Summer on this Verse, and purposes to close it this day; there are two Objections, one taken from *David*'s guilt, *My house is not so with God*, another taken from God's Providence, *Although he make it not to grow*; The first of these I have handled in several Sermons, and told you what was meaned by *David*'s House, it was not right with God. There are two Observations remains, and both of them Native, and very Important. First, There is this. *Doct.*

Doct. 1. *That Challenges for guilt of our house, are excellently answered in the Covenant*; the Application of the Covenant, is the proper Salve for such Sores, I intended to have handled this Truth at some length, but when I consider that famous Mr. *Dickson* in his *Therapeutica*, a Book he hath written for securing all Cases by application of this Covenant, hath handled this so fully, that I resolve to forbear; I recommend only that Book to you, where ye will find many diseases the Soul is lyable to, and they are all cured, by Application of the Covenant, it's not this Truth then that I will insist on.

Doct. 2. There is another Observation lies in this, *Although my house be not so with God, That though a Believer be challenged for guilt, and the sins of his house, yet he is not to cast at the Covenant.* The sense of guilt ought not to put a Christian to cast at the Covenant. *Though my house be not so with God*, yet *David* can assert his interest in the Covenant, notwithstanding of all his guilt, personal or publick, or in his Family: This is a native Truth and maffie, ye have a remarkable confirmation of it, *Nehemiah* 9. 32. throughout the Chapter, he is confessing the sins of the Kings, of the Princes, of the Priests, of the Prophets, of his Fathers, and of the People; and yet in this *verse* he appeals to God, as their God, *Now therefore, O our God, the great, the mighty and the terrible God, who keepeth Covenant and Mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, on our Priests, and on our Prophets, and on our Fathers, and on all thy People, since the time of the Kings of Assyria, unto this day*, &c. There a multitude of sins that are confessed by him, throughout the Chapter, and he looks on God as Mighty and Terrible, and yet none of them dings him from the Covenant; whatever be the smell of our guilt, or of our Family, yet we are not to cast at the Covenant.

I will in following this Truth, speak a little to these three things. *First*, I shall give you some grounds to prove, that whatever be a persons guilt, yet they are not to cast at the Covenant. *Secondly*, I shall clear some practical Cases about it; and, *Thirdly*, shall apply it.

First, I shall give you some grounds to prove, that whatever be a sinners guilt he is not to cast at the Covenant, *though my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me a Covenant*; I will offer you these five remarkable grounds to prove it;

it; The first I take from God, and there are three things in God relating to the Covenant, that will prove the truth of this. 1. For all our guilt God holds the Covenant firm: guilt casts us not out of the Covenant, it may cast us out of fellowship, that will not cast us out of the Covenant, Jer. 3. 1. *Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord.* And *vers.* 14. *Return, backsliding Children, saith the Lord, for I am married to you;* here the Covenant holds firm, and since God holds the Covenant firm under guilt, we may warrantably plead the Covenant, even though we be guilty of many sins. 2*ly*, When people are guilty, God makes them offer of the Covenant, Isa. 1. 18. *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Ps. 68. *Though ye have lyen among the pots, ye shall appear as doves*, &c. And since God offers the Covenant, when we are most guilty, may not we warrantably rely on it? 3*ly*, God hath given experience in Scripture, of his accomplishing his Covenant to them, whose house were not so with God; the great instance we have in *David*, in *Solomon*, in *Manasseh*, in *Paul* and *Peter*, who are now walking in long white Robes in Glory, they all prove, that it holds fast and accomplishes his Covenant, though their house be not so with God. All these laid together, evidence, and are the first grounds of the point, that when we come to be challenged for guilt, yet we may warrantably rely on, and plead the Covenant.

2*ly*, The second ground is this, though it be true the Covenant be a created thing, it's finit, yet the rise and Seals of it are infinit; there is nothing properly infinit, but allanerly God and consequently the Covenant is infinit, mercy is the rise of it, and truth is the seal of it, and they are essential Attributes of God; so, though the Covenant & the Promises be created things, (though they be finit) yet the fountain of the Promises, and the Seals of them are infinit; now whatever guilt thy soul can be challenged for, thou has some thing that's infinit in the Covenant, the rise and seal of it cannot but be for finit guilt, a sufficient ground of relying on infinit mercy & truth; if *Peter* should stand & say, Christs righteousness, I have denyed him; if *Paul* should say, Christs righteousness, I have blasphemed; his righteousness will not cover my sin; that which is sufficient to cover the sin of all

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the elect, is sufficient to cover the sin of any particular elect; there is ground under callenges to rely on the Covenant, the mercy of it is infinit, & the truth whereby it's sealed is infinit. 3*ly*, The great end for which God challenges for guilt is, to drive sinners to the Covenant; it's the great end for which he challenges, and tells the person, *my house is not so with God*, it's not to drive them from the Covenant, but to it: the Law in this case becomes a School-master to lead to Christ; of all the Logick that ever I read, it was the worst in *Peter*, to say to Christ, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man*; he had rather ground to say, come to me, for he was the Saviour of Sinners, & he had his Name *Jesus* on that score, because he saves his people from their sins. Now to say, *Depart from me*, to him, the case is so, as when we say, our house is not so with God, and I cannot take the Covenant; the moe challenges, the greater need of the Covenant; and here remember, that when challenges and terrours are impediments to Faith, they are like *Jordan*, flowing over all it's Banks, they are never kept in their proper limits, but when they rely on the Covenant, and the mercy and truth, that are the springs and seals of the Covenant.

4*ly*, Take notice of this, as one ground of the truth of this, that challenges, and guilt should not drive us from the Covenant, but to the Covenant; ordinarily a rejecting of mercy, is a dismal sin; hardly is there a greater injury done to Christ, than when challenges, or sense of guilt, puts us to cast at his mercy, & his Covenant; I like the Divinity of one, that tells, *Judas* did Christ a great wrong in betraying him, but a far greater in despairing of his mercy; in betraying him, he laboured to take away Christs life as a man, but in despairing of his mercy, he laboured to take away the life of God; there is no greater sin, than when we cast at his mercy; it is despair, to entertain challenges, and dwell on them, & not rely on the Covenant; now despair, of all sins against God, it's one of the most hellish-like, and one of the greatest sins: I will let you see four evils that ly in this sin of despair, & are peculiar to it. 1. Despair opposes God in his greatest Commands, the greatest Command that ever he gave, was to believe in his Son, 1 *Joh.* 3. 23. *This is his Command, that we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ*; now despair is unbelief in the highest degree, therefore it opposes

God in his greateſt Commands. *2ly*, It oppoſes God in one of his chiefeſt Attributes, the great end why he made the world, was not to be glorified in his Power, in his Wiſdom, in his Juſtice, but in his Mercy and his Grace, there is the great end of Creation & Providence, that he may be exalted in his Mercy and his Grace, & deſpair oppoſes him in this. *3ly*, Deſpair it enrages the ſoul againſt God, the damned in hell that are deſpairing of Chriſts mercy, are weeping and howling & gnaſhing their teeth, they would even bite God, if they could reach him; they are compared to a Dog gnaſhing his teeth: in the place of the damned, there is nothing to be heard there, but howling, & curſing, & gnaſhing of teeth, and that for ever and ever; the reaſon is, they deſpair of Chriſts mercy: had they hope after a million of years to come to glory, they would lay by their howling and curſing, but that hope is paſt them; the door is cloſed, and they are enraged & fighting deſperatly, & none fights ſo deſperatly, as Souldiers that expect no Quarters. *4ly*, Deſpair makes every ſin unpardonable; the ſmalleſt ſin committed in the courſe of our life, becomes unpardonable ſin, if it be venomed with the venome of deſpair, ſo ye ſee deſpair, of all ſins is moſt dreadful, & moſt diſmal to God, and he that caſts at the Covenant when he is challenged for guilt, muſt deſpair, & ſo eminently diſhonour God. *Laſtly*, We are not to caſt at the Covenant, in regard there is no way of an outgate from challenges but from the Covenant; let folk turn themſelves where they will under terrours, there is no way of an outgate but from the Covenant, & readily they that ſeek their contentment in other things, & caſt at the comforts of God under their terrours, they are driven to ſeek an outgate in their luſts; I remember a Paſſage of famous Mr. *Hutcheſon*, having one day to deal with a perſon under the terrours of God, with whom he had been ſeveral times, he made offer of the Covenant to him, but the man did caſt at all the offers of the Covenant, and was overwhelmed with terrours, & after ſeveral Arguments he pleaded with him thus, ſays he, if ye ſtubbornly refuſe the comforts of God, ye ſhall at length ſeek your comfort in your luſts; and a little after, the man turned Profligat; and continued Profligat and Prophane. Now lay all theſe together, and ye will ſee the truth of the point, that when God challenges for guilt, it's not our part to caſt at

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the Covenant, but the more firmly to adhere and cleave to it, and assert an interest in it.

Before I apply it, there are two cases I will clear; *First*, one may ask? Shall every one under challenges lay claim to the Covenant? There may be a twofold difficulty here; *First*, I am not sufficiently humbled to lay claim to the Covenant, great sins should have great repentance; *Manasseh* was a great sinner, and the Scripture says, he humbled himself greatly before God; Or. *Secondly*, readily one may say, I come short of grief for sin, and of the tears that an hypocrite will have, and shall I lay claim to the Covenant, and assert an Interest in it?

For removing of these, the truth of this will hold, that when we come to be challenged for guilt, we are not to run from the Covenant, but to rely on it and assert an interest in it; this Objection overturns not the truth of the point: For, 1. There is a twofold suitableness of humiliation unto the sins we have committed, there is a Legal humiliation, and an Evangelick; a Legal humiliation requires an exact proportion of repentance, to the degree and measure of the sin; an Evangelick humiliation requires a sincere and upright repentance; now, when we come to be challenged for guilt, and we should stand at embracing the Covenant, upon the account there is no suitable humiliation to the sin, consider it's true, if it be an unsuitable Evangelick humiliation, that is not sincere, thou cannot plead the Covenant, but though it be not legal humiliation, thou may plead the Covenant. A man in his grief for sin, before he come to plead the Covenant, he should do as a man coming to a deep Water, O! saith he, I will drown before I come to the middle of it, therefore he casts about to see if he can get a Bridge; the truth is, the Gospel-suitableness is a Bridge to a Legal-suitableness; many take the Water, and ask not the way to the Bridge, therefore their terrours distract them, and it is as it were the beginning of Hell to them. But I add, 2*ly*, A hypocrite may have no terrours when they are humbled, and possibly more joy at another time, than a sound Believer will have, for terrours and joy are but pendicles of Grace; *viz.* of their Faith, Love, and Delight in God, they are concomitants of the great Graces of the Spirit; a Hypocrite may outstrip a sound Believer in terrours, and flashes of joy, but they

they cannot out-ſtrip them in believing, loving & delighting in God, certainly *Judas* ſorrow for ſin, when he hanged himſelf, as to the degree, was greater than *Peters*, I like the diſtinction Divines have, betwixt terrours of conſcience & terrours in the heart, the leaſt wound in the heart is dangerous, the pain of the heart is deadly, it does not admit of *ſolutio continui*, as Phyſicians ſay, but there may be a Fire and a Hell kindled in the conſcience, that little affects the heart, though a hypocrite out-ſtrip thee in terrours and flaſhes of joy, yet if thou has win to the Bridge that leads over the deep water of legal Humiliation, it's Evangelick Sincerity; if in thy mourning thou haſt looked on him whom thou haſt pierced, it's Evangelick Humiliation.

There is another caſe occurs; By what rules may a ſinner know that he is humbled for ſin, that he may go and apply the Covenant? How ſhall we know, that even Evangelically our Humiliation is ſuch as we may go & make uſe of the Covenant? we ſay not (for anſwer) that all ſinners, and all humbled ſinners, may ay run to the Covenant; that great *Antinomian Criſp*, he makes uſe of that word, a ſinner reeking in ſin, immediatly after they have committed the ſin, ſays he, they have no more ado, but go to the Covenant, but we ſay, they muſt repent and be humbled, and believe, and go to the Covenant: we ſay, that thy legal Humiliation not being ſuitable to thy ſin, ſhould not hinder thee from going to the Covenant, if thou be ſincere. By what Rules then ſhall one try, if he may plead the Covenant? I will offer three or four Rules. 1. Take notice of this, that Gods way in humbling ſinners, and bringing them to the Covenant, is diverſe; there are ſome folks wound he will let out with a Pin, others he will take a Sword to: as to the Work of Effectual Calling, the beginnings of it are ſometimes dreadful; it's remarkable, the Jaylor before he be baptized, O! but his Work begins dreadfully, he thinks the Priſoners are all eſcaped, & he thinks there is nothing for him but death, & preſently he calls for a light, and yet we find him immediatly baptized; there is no ſuch thing in *Lydias* caſe, there is no more, but God opened her heart. Some folks will get their Humiliation like drops of dew, there are others, they will get it like a deludge. But, 2*ly*, As Gods way is diverſe

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in bringing to the Covenant, ſo there are three qualifications of humiliation for guilt, that whatever perſon hath them, they may in that place warrantably go, & rely on the Covenant, and apply it. 1. When the ſoul comes to be humbled for that which is worſt in ſin; the worſt is not, that it is damning, but that it is diſhonourable to God; & when the ſinner comes to be humbled for guilt, as it is diſhonourable to God, or having in it rebellion againſt his Law, ingratitude againſt his mercy, and contempt againſt his Majeſty, when a ſoul is grieved for that which is worſt in ſin, in that caſe they may apply the Covenant, and rely on it, and have ſome ſweet grounds of the accompliſhment of the Promiſes of the Covenant. 2*ly*, When the ſoul is ſo humbled, as it's content to take the Covenant on the terms of the Covenant, without the alteration of any of the terms, they are content to take him for a Saviour, and as content to take him for a King: Oftentimes we would alter ſomething in the order & method, & nature of the Covenant; but when we are content to take it for good & ill, for duties & priviledges, when the ſoul is ſo humbled, as it's content to take Chriſt for King, Prieſt, and Prophet, & to take him in all the Articles of it as it ſtands; in that caſe the Soul is Evangelically humble, and may plead the Covenant, & rely upon it. 3*ly*, When the ſoul is humbled not only for the guilt of ſin, but for the blot of ſin, that it hath defiled; a believer in his humiliation, is like a man that will not touch a Coal, ſome will not touch Coals becauſe they are hot, but this man that hath a clean hand, will not touch them, becauſe they are black. When a perſon comes to be humbled for the guilt of their houſe, that it is not ſo with God, it runs upon theſe three Channels, and if it run upon theſe three, the humiliation ſeems to be Evangelically qualified, and a perſon may very warrantably, according to the current of the Scriptures, go and plead the Covenant: and thus I have cleared the Doctrinal part.

Uſe 1. For uſe of the Point, it ſerves, 1. To reprove two ſorts of people. *Firſt*, Thoſe that plead the Covenant too haſtily, and thoſe that plead it too ſlowly. 1. Thoſe that plead the Covenant too haſtily, go on in their peace, joy and conſolation, in down right *Antinomian* Principles, they are reeking in ſin, and yet go & plead the Covenant; *What haſt thou*

to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth, Pſal. 50. *ſince thou hates to be reformed?* No, your hands will be knocked off from the Covenant; all that grip to the Covenant, and hath not Evangelick humiliation, your hands ſhall be knocked off. I tremble to ſee many dying perſons pleading the Covenant, & hoping for mercy, yea even ſome in old age dying, and pleading to the Covenant, and knows neither what Legal nor Evangelick humiliation means; take heed any of you that viſits the ſick, that ye ſend them not into Hell reeking, and flattering them with a deluſion in their right hand.

There are ſome plead the Covenant too ſlowly, they think they are never right but when they are under terrours, and they cannot long enough travail under them, they are wading the Water that goes over their head, & goes not about to the Bridge, it's righteous with God to give them their fill of terrours, and to do with them as he did with that great Divine Mr. *Lawer*, who prayed unto the Lord, that he would give him terrours, that he might know what they were, and the Lord gave him his fill of them, ſo that he went to the Grave forbidding all men to pray for terrours.

I will only exhort one another of you, that are now and then put to this, *My houſe is not ſo with God*, to take the Covenant; be not driven from it, and I will give you three Rules in pleading of it. 1. Plead the Covenant in the right method of it, remember ye of the ordering of the Covenant, the abſolute Promiſes are to be taken before the Conditional, the Promiſes of the firſt Graces before the ſecond; plead the Covenant in the right method of it, if ye cry, Lord, give me pardon, and has never gotten Repentance; if ye cry, Lord, give me peace, and has never gotten pardon, ye pray out of the Order of the Covenant; the Order of the Covenant is, we muſt firſt repent, and then have pardon, we muſt firſt have pardon, and then have peace; thou that preſſes the Covenant out of the Order of it, thou art not praying in Faith, thou art tempting God, and bidding him overturn the Covenant, that is well ordered in reference to thy particular caſe; and if thou haſt never had the Promiſes of the firſt Graces, thou wilt not get the Promiſes of the ſecond, thou wilt never have peace, until thou get a new heart, and repent. 2*ly*, I will give you this Direction, know, that though there be not proportional ſorrow to your guilt, nay, though poſſibly

poſſibly ye can hardly diſcern it Evangelically, yet plead the Covenant. Some all their terrors, or the great flood of them, are in the beginning of their Converſion; others get them in the progreſs of Sanctification, many have their praying, believing, and reading, mingled in with terrors; if thou has a ſound work the day, thou art baptized, its well, or if he give thee thy terrors by drops, after thou haſt cloſed the Covenant, its well. 3. I exhort thee in pleading the Covenant, if thou has been humbled enough, and relyed on it, and haſt gotten any clearing of thy Intereſt in it, make not a day-y diſpute of thy Intereſt to it; it were good, when we have gotten any clearing of our Intereſt, to lay down principles, that we would walk by, in the whole courſe of our life; its ſad to have God ay renewing our Evidences every day, or then we will not only diſpute them, but deny them.

SERMON XL.

2 Samuel 23. 5.

Although my houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things, and ſure; for this is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire, although He make it not to grow.

THe latter Words of this Verſe I will now handle, *Although he make it not to grow*; The ſcope of them is, to anſwer an Objection againſt Gods making a Covenant with *David*: there were many Providences tryſting *David*, ſeeming inconſiſtent with the Covenant, as he had guilt in his houſe, ſo he had Croſſes and grounds of fears for the future, all theſe are ſummed up in theſe Words. *Although he make it not to grow*, the word in the *Hebrew* is from a Root, that ſignifies to ſprout, or bud; ſome take it as borrowed from a bird being with Egg; *Junius* renders it, *non facit pullulare*: *Montanus* renders it, *non geminare facit*; both theſe Tranſlations confirm our Tranſlation, that he doeth not yet make it to grow; but like a

flower in the bud, or a bird in the egg, in due time it will grow; *The Lord hath made with me an everlasting Covenant*, and though Providences answerable to the Covenant, do not yet appear, they will appear, he will make them to grow, although he make it not to grow. Without insisting more to clear the words, I will take two or three brief Observations, and shal only name the two first, and speak a little to the third, and with it close the whole Verse.

First, Ye may remember, it is implyed in this part of the verse, that sometimes, when we would lay claim to the Covenant, Providence stands up to hinder us.

Doctrine, *Its a most difficult put, to believe the promises against the stream of providence*; remember the word *Gideon* answered the Angel, any would have thought, considering *Gideon* as a Believer, and he is recorded among the cloud of Witnesses, *Heb.* 11. And considering it was an Angel that spoke it, *The Lord is with thee, thou valiant man*, when he was threshing his Wheat for fear of the *Midianites*, *if the Lord be with us*, says *Gideon*, *how is all this come upon us*? The providence that *Israel* and *Gideon* was trysted with, made him doubt the Promise, even out of the mouth of an Angel.

And here I would have you notice three things remarkable. 1. Several times the Promise, it seems to point a very direct cross way to the Providence of God; the Providence will seem to be walking toward the east, as it were, when the Promise is walking to the Airt direct contrary: so ye will find, if ye take the strain of the Bible; who would think but the Godly should have prosperity? should have answers of Prayers? have many days of communion and fellowship that they want? who would think, but that the wicked should be broken? having all the Plagues written in the Bible coming on them? yet take this Bible, both in the Promissory or Threatning Part of it, and ye shal find the Promises, as it were quite contrary to the Providence, *Asaph* is corrected every morning, and the wicked their eyes stand out with fatness; *Psal.* 73. 21 Notice this, that it is a very ordinary thing for Satan in his Temptations, to bring Providences against the Promise, the Lord will give him a Commission sometimes, as he did to *Job*, take his cattel, take his sheep,

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and then take his Children, and then he put his body in his power, excepting only his Life, and when he hath done all this, he brings in his friends to call him an Hypocrite, and brings his Wife, to bid him curse God and die; never gets the Adversary more advantage, than when our back is at the wall, under the cross, and then he puts us to doubt of the Promise: Temptations never have such a back, as when they are backed with Affliction; so that as the Providence and Promise seem contrary, the Politick Adversary will take advantage of the Providence, and put the Soul to doubt of the Promise.

3. Note this, that a Believer, though he be called to live a Life of Faith, and to be endeavouring it, yet he is strongly inclined to live a Life of Sense; there is nothing more natural to us than this, of all the difficult things that *Luther* found, he professed it to be one of the greatest, to trust in a correcting God, and believe in a withdrawing God; men have such an inclination to live by sense, that the generality of the world, for a long time were enemies to Christians, on this ground. O! say they, they call us to believe in a crucified Lord, and he that was not able to save himself, is he able to save his People? so, since Providences go contrair to the Promise, and since Satan will argue from Providences against the Promise, and find his advantage in our nature, to be inclining us so strongly to live by Sense, and not by Faith, no wonder it be a considerable Objection against the Covenant, that he makes it not to grow. This Truth, if it were beat out, might be singularly useful; I believe many has found it, that God's Providence, and his Dealings with the Church, hath inclined you to the opinion of Ranters, that they are half Fools, that will credit one Promise, when they find all Providences rolling against that Promise; and how many times are ye put to it in your particular case, like *Rebecca*, ye have the Twins struggling within you, why am I thus, says she, under such Terrors and Afflictions? there lyes the great Exception ye have against the Promise, and the Providence, that he makes it not to grow; Learn to guard against this, I will offer you three or four remarkable Things, that may contribute to guard against it. 1. Consider, Christian, the chiefest Believer may have no

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conſiderable Providence, when the Providence is made an Argument againſt the Promiſe; what ſtrong Tryals had *Abraham*'s Faith? the Angel tells *Sarah* that ſhe ſhould bear a Son, but ſhe had a dead womb; another time he is told by the Angel, that he muſt take his Son *Iſaac*, and offer him up in Sacrifice, even though the Promiſe ran, *in* Iſaac *ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed*; might he not well argue, will all the Nations of the Earth be Bleſſed in a Burnt-ſacrifice? he muſt take off his Head, and offer him upon an Altar, but he conſidered not the deadneſs of *Sarah*'s Womb, and ſtaggered not at the Promiſe, but gave glory to God, and believed, that out of the Aſhes of *Iſaac*, he could accompliſh his Promiſe, So that God's choiſeſt Friends have not had conſiderable Providences, when they were made uſe of, as Arguments againſt the Promiſe. 2. Take Notice of this, That all Providences work together in their ultimat end, for accompliſhing the Promiſes; its true, He whoſe way is in the Sea, and whoſe paths are in the deep waters, His motion is like the wheels of a Clock, any that would look on them, and ſee them move croſs one to another, would wonder whereto they tended, but all theſe motions tend, to make the Clock ſtrike when the hour comes; all the Providences of God do tend to the accompliſhing of the Promiſe, its true, we ſee not their tendency; but they all tend, and in the end, they all reſolve in the accompliſhment of the Promiſe. 3. Ye would notice this, that Providences are not a Believers Rule; I confeſs there is a ſweet uſe of Providences, he that obſerves them, will underſtand much of the loving-kindneſs of the Lord; there are ſome godly men of this Church, now in glory, there was nothing could befall them, but they were conſtantly put to turn it over, even the ſmalleſt of things, that they might read out ſome meſſage from God under it, and yet never took them to Providences for their Rule, they took them to the Word, and to the Promiſes for their Rule: Providences are not our Rule, its the Word of God, and the Promiſe, that we are to walk by, ſo that, be the Providence what it will, a Believer hath a key to open it with, and interpret it by; therefore be the Providence

vidence what it will, they need not ſtagger at the Promiſe. 4. I will add this, that ſeldom is a Chriſtian tryſted with ſuch Providences, but in one thing or other, they have the accompliſhment of the Promiſe, there is either one Promiſe or another accompliſhed; if God deny one, he is making out another, and the accompliſhment of one Promiſe, may be a ſeal of the whole Covenant; I will ſay no more of this Truth; only guard againſt it, that Providence put you not to ſtagger at the Promiſe.

Doctrine, There is another Word lying in this, *Although he make it not to grow*, and its this, *That however God delay in his Providence to accompliſh Promiſes, yet a Believer hath the Promiſe in the Seed, or in the bud*; The Word ſignifies to ſpring, though he make it not to ſpring, a metaphor taken from a Plant, that is not yet above the Ground, though Believers find not the Promiſes ſpringing and growing, yet they have them in the Seed. There is a three-fold Seed, that accompliſhes conſolation to Believers, in their greateſt difficulties. 1. The Seed they are looking for, is in the decree and purpoſe of God; *I know what thoughts I have to you ward, thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected end*; The Lord is ſending them to *Babylon*, and to encourage them, he ſays, I know what thoughts I have to you ward, my hand is carrying you to *Babylon*, but my heart is to give you an expected end; the mercy that they look for, though it grow not, yet they have it in the Decree and Thought of GOD. 2. Things hoped for, though they grow not, yet they are often in the Seed of Secondary Cauſes, and the Tendency of them may be a Seed, out of which they may grow; the Lord ſometimes may remove his Enemies, and put diviſions among them, and put them under Challenges, and yet they may be the Seed of an outgate to the Church, readily he will tryſt them with ſuch Providences, as in the beginning, none will ſee whereto they tend, and yet in the end, he will bring out of them the accompliſhment of the Promiſe. 3. He will bring out the Seed out of the Providences themſelves, the days will come, when Holineſs ſhal be written on Horſes Bells, and the Wolf and the Lamb ſhal ly down together,

together, and none of them ſhal hurt other; and poſſibly the Child is unborn, that ſhal ſee theſe days of the mercies made over by the Covenant; and though they appear not, yet a Believer hath them in the Seed, they are like Seed ſown in the Ground, and a Spring ſhal come: and here is a ſpecial encouragement, a Believer may have doubting and trembling thoughts, about the caſe of the Church, and aſtoniſhment whiles about thy own caſe, even for what appears above ground, but the Seed of Deliverance to the Church, and other mercies to thee, are in the Promiſe, wait till the Spring come, and the Winter be over and gone, and thou ſhalt ſee them ſprouting, as ever thou ſaw a Plant ſpring and ſprout in the Spring time.

Doctrine 3. Thirdly Obſerve, *That even when Providences make againſt the Promiſe, yet a Believer ſhould rely on the Promiſe, and on the Covenant: though he make it not to grow; yet its ſure, its ordered, its all thy Salvation, and all thy Deſire, its everlaſting.* So this point falls in natively here, and there are three things I will ſpeak a little to here. 1. In what caſes a Believer ſhould rely on the Promiſe, when Providences make againſt it. 2. On what Grounds they ſhould rely on the Promiſe. And 3. I ſhal apply it.

Firſt, In what caſes a Believer ſhould rely on the Promiſe, when the Providence makes againſt it? And here I will inſtance four or five Caſes. 1. When we pray and God delays to anſwer; we ought then to take our anſwer out of the Promiſe, ordinarly we pray in the day time, and in the night time we are not heard, our throat may be hoarſe with crying, and our eyes fail with looking up, and get no anſwer; in that caſe, a Chriſtian is to take his anſwer out of the Promiſe, the Promiſe ought to ſupply, and make up the room of the Providence, the more patiently one wait for anſwers in Prayer, and ly ſtill untill the Promiſe come, and take the Bible and the Promiſe, and feed on it, until the Providence come, the more peace when it is come. 2. Though Providences ſeem contrair to the Promiſe, yet we are to rely on the Covenant, and that even when God is writing bitter things againſt his Church; ſeveral

ral times his Providences are plucking up that which hath been planted, and pulling down that which hath been built, he may bring a Vine out of *Egypt*, and bring a wild Boar out of the Forreſt to trample it down; in that caſe they are to take them to the Promiſe, they ſhould credit and rejoyce in the Promiſe, and take up the Pſalm Book, and ſing upon the credit of the Promiſe. A third Caſe wherein they are to hazard on the Promiſe, when Providences ſeem contrary to them, is when God withdraws and hides, and readily becomes a terror, ſeveral times he will do ſo, do ye not find him do ſo? Though he be your hope, will he not ſometimes be your terror? any that read the Bible may think, if I be redeemed, how is he my terror? Thou haſt forgotten the Promiſe, and he hath put thee to read over forgotten Promiſes, and that is to put thee to take the Promiſe, until the Providence come. 4. In all Caſes of affliction, the Lord takes away a Husband, a Wife, a Child, and may be takes away Proſperity, and gives thee Adverſity; in that caſe, he will take away the Providence from thee, and have thee to feed on the Promiſe; there is no caſe, wherein the Providence ſeems hardly comparable with the Promiſe, but he would have thee to feed on the Promiſe, and take the Promiſe in the place of the providence.

Therefore I ſhal ſhew you on what grounds, when God makes not the thing to grow, and we can ſee nothing above the Ground in the Providence, that we ſhould then eſpecially adhere to the Covenant. 1. Let Providences be what they will, all the Seals remain at the Covenant; it is Sealed with the Oath of GOD, with the Blood of his *Son*, thou haſt gotten it Sealed with the Seal of the Spirit of Promiſe, *Epheſ.* 1. 13. Let Providences be what they will, God hath not taken away one Seal from the Covenant; grant it be ill with the Church of God, grant thou gets no anſwer of Prayer, grant thou be haunted with Terrors, and outwardly with Croſſes, yet always the Covenant is ſure; he hath not broken off one Seal from the Covenant, it ſtands as at the beginning, its ſure, and the Oath of God is at it, the Blood of God is at it, and may we not then firmly rely

on

on the Covenant? 2. I would have you notice, That ſeveral times God tryſts Chriſtians with croſs Providences, purpoſely to make them rely on the Covenant; oftentimes the deſign of Croſſes is, to try if Faith will take a naked Promiſe upon the credit of God, and rejoyce in it; ſome afflictions come for chaſtiſements of ſin, but ſome comes meerly for tryal, *Job's* afflictions were of this nature, its true, he was a ſinner, yet all that came on him, was not for ſin, but for tryal, the LORD bids Satan examine him, *Haſt thou conſidered my Servant Job?* and how well can he ſay his Leſſon, this was deſigned for tryal, to ſee if he would keep by God, and to the Covenant, in the midſt of all that tryal; therefore, like a Maſter triumphing in his Schollars, the Lord tells Satan, he ſtill retains his integrity, though thou haſt moved me againſt him without cauſe; in the midſt of all his tryals, he will not take with it, that he was a Hypocrite, as there are ſome, they cannot be perſwaded but they are Hypocrites, ſo there are ſome, none can perſwade them that they are Hypocrites, I will maintain my integrity before him, that is, I will maintain it to his face. 3. Take notice of this, that hardly is there any thing more honourable to God, than to rely on a Promiſe, when all Providences ſeems againſt it; this gives glory to God eminently; but when we, like *Thomas*, will not believe except we ſee, and put in our hand into the Print of the Nails, its diſhonourable to him, *James* 2. 23. *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs*, and he was called, *the friend of God*; *Abraham* could not kyth himſelf more God's friend, in any thing he could do, than in believing, that out of the Aſhes of *Iſaac*, he was able to fulfil his Promiſe; and that though *Sarahs* womb was dead, yet he ſtaggered not at the Promiſe: There is nothing more honourable to God, than when we can truſt him againſt Senſe, and as *Abraham* believed in hope againſt hope. 4. Conſider this, That relying on the Promiſe againſt Providence, as its honourable to God, and excellently improven, when we are tryed, and all the Seals appended and continue firm at this Covenant; So *Fourthly*, Conſider, that Providences they

they are all to be Examined by the Promiſes, but the Promiſes are not to be Examined by the Providences; if ye would know a Providence, if it be an Act of Mercy, or an Act of Wrath, ye are to try it by the Word, ye are not to try the Promiſes by the Providences, the Promiſe is the Touch-ſtone, by which the Providence is to be tryed; on this account it comes to paſs, one may have a Rod in Mercy, and another in Wrath; one may have ſharp Diſpenſations in Mercy, and another may have them in Wrath; *My Son, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtiſement of the Lord, for every ſon whom he receives, he chaſtens, and if ye be without chaſtiſement, ye are Baſtards and not Sons.*

Uſe, For Uſe, I would preſs the practice of this in two Caſes, Firſt, In reference to the deſolate Caſe of the Church of God; O! but Providences look unlike the Promiſes, in the Caſe of the Church, what? ſhal we, becauſe his ſmall handful are ſo Toſſed, ſo Divided and Rent, and the Adverſaries ſo great, ſo High and Potent, ſhal we therefore caſt away Hope, but that he yet will ariſe and revive his Work in the midſt of the days? No, ſo long as there ſtands a Bible, and ſo well ordered a Covenant, and Promiſes, and in theſe Promiſes *Scotlands* Peace is concerned; therefore, whatever Providences ſeem contrair to the Promiſe, caſt not away Hope, take the Promiſes, and read them, and apply them to the Churches Caſe; and feed on them, until the Providence come. 2. Improve it, any of you that is Clogged in Spirit, Alas! ye know not what to ſay of your Caſe; Guiltineſs and Terror ſtares you in the Face; but is there any Seal taken from the Covenant? Is it not Ratified by the Blood of his Son? and want ye ground of Hope, ſo long as it is ſo well Ratified; and though it grow not ſo well as to the outward man, yet ye have a Rich Charter, be not driven by Croſſes from the Covenant; learn this, that ye would now believe, and credit the Covenant, and Promiſes, *Although he make it not to grow.*

Now from all that hath been ſaid on this Verſe, I will only ſay theſe three things. 1. I ſhal give you a brief account of what led me to this Text, I found the

Refuge of the Soul in Diſtreſs, to ly in the Covenant, ſometimes at the Gates of Death, when other Refuges failed them, they found no other; I my ſelf found no other for my Soul, but to run to the Covenant in the Latitude and Freedom of it, and ſince it appeared ſo ſweet, it was ſomewhat troubleſome to me, that I had not handled it ere now; but in handling of it, I gave an account of the Nature of *David's* Security, and then I handled perſonal Covenanting, *The Lord hath made with me*; ye heard ten or twelve Sermons on that head. And 2. I came and handled the Properties of the Covenant, that it was *Everlaſting*, *Sure*, and *Ordered in all things*, where ye heard ſeveral things on the Order and Method of the Covenant, that a Chriſtian ſhould keep, to keep him from Deluſion, and falſe Peace in the Covenant. 3. I came to the Superſtructures, *This is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire*; I ſhewed you that that man that will plead for Mercy and Grace, and hath no right to the Covenant, he hath no ground to plead them, more than the Devils have, for they know that he is Merciful and Gracious, the thing that makes the Devils have no claim to his Mercy and Grace is, becauſe they have no claim to his Covenant. I have now ſtudied the Covenant, and laid it out before you, as the great Foundation of Sanctification and Conſolation, and as the great Charter of Juſtification; Now I ſay, having gone through all theſe, I would put all of you, that has been hearing theſe Sermons, to theſe three Queſtions. 1. I would inquire, What more Light have ye of the Covenant than before? *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them his Covenant*, *Pſal.* 25. What know ye more of the Covenant than before? of the Nature of it? nay, of perſonal Covenanting? of the Properties of it? of the Sweetneſs and Conſolation that comes from it? if ye have no more Light, and knowledge of it than before, the Lord, and the Stones and Timber of this Houſe, ſhal be a witneſs againſt you in the day of Reckoning, that this Covenant hath been holden out to you, in the Latitude and Freedom of it, and among all things that ye have

heard

heard, it may be a ſufficient Witneſs againſt you, when ye meet your Judge in the Valley of Deciſion. But 2. Another Queſtion is, Whether hath what ye have heard from the Covenant, made you enter in a Perſonal Covenant with him? I have ſeveral days ſent you home beſeeching you to enter in a Perſonal Covenant with him, and I have given you Directions and Helps how to do it, and hath the Wind blown it all away, and ye have done nothing? have ye not Covenanted againſt the corruptions that the heart inclined you moſt unto? have ye not Covenanted to accept of his Son on the Terms of the Covenant? I cloſe this Text with wondering how ye have gotten it ſit out, if ye have not yet ſet about it, I exhort you in my Maſter's Name, in the cloſe of this Text, that now ye would Indenture, and make a Perſonal Covenant with him. Go and Indenture and Covenant with him, otherwiſe the Lord, and this place of Scripture, ſhall one day joyn together, and ſay, *Depart from me ye curſed, I know you not.* 3. A third Queſtion is, Ye that have been Hearers of me, whether now, when ye have heard me all out, ye have heard Chriſt commended, ye hear the Contract was well drawn, ye heard what Grounds of Salvation, and what Satisfaction to Deſires, is in the Covenant, and have ye not heard, how a Perſon may plead the Covenant, under many Challenges? Now, whether or not are ye content this day, to accept Chriſt on the Terms offered, after ye have heard all I could ſay, or read about it, are ye content to accept him; ſay ye, Amen, even ſo I take Him? are ye content on theſe very Terms holden out in the Covenant, to accept of him? I teſtifie unto you, that at the Gates of Death, neither you, nor I, will know of another way of Refuge from his Wrath, but to run to this Covenant; are ye ſaying, Now, even ſo I take Him, as He is offered in the Covenant? then have Him, and His Fathers Bleſſing with Him, a Bargain be it, there wanted nothing twenty years ſince, but thy Conſent, the only thing that delayed the Marriage was thy Conſent; and

and if in the Close of this Day, this be thy Note thou haſt gotten, Even ſo I take Him, according to the Tenor of that Covenant, this ſhall be the Place of Scripture, that thou ſhalt bleſs the Day that ever thou heard it opened to thee, that thou was content to accept and imbrace this Chriſt, on the Credit of the Promiſe, thou may take Him, and hazard all thy Life on Him.

FINIS.